THE COMMONWEAL

A Weekly Review of Literature, The Arts, and Public Affairs.

Volume IX — New York, Wednesday, February 13, 1929 — Number 15

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Published weekly and copyrighted 1929, in the United States by the Calvert Publishing Corporation, Grand Central Terminal, New York, N. Y. United States: $5.00; Foreign: $6.00; Canada: $5.50. Single Copies: $.10.

GENERAL BOOTH GOES TO COURT

THE High Council of the Salvation Army will not think it kindly of us to express our conviction that the court decision nullifying its dismissal of General Bramwell Booth was all for the good. Neither will it thank the judge for the extra trouble his verdict has entailed. It can proceed to oust the General again, but first it must listen to the arguments of his lawyers in order to remove any effective basis for another appeal to the court. That the General will have no end of sympathy from the uninfluential in his ranks is certain, especially since the dramatic death of one of his opponents is being taken in many stations as a sign.

The question of who shall govern the Salvation Army, and whether or not its leadership is to be hereditary, should not properly concern us, nor any but the zealous evangels themselves. We are inviting a very reasonable rebuke for presuming to comment at all on the purely internal and personal affairs of the Army. Yet it is in the nature of a compliment, too; for the Salvation Army has become too interesting a part of the social structure to hope to keep its trials and troubles to itself, and many have felt that it genuinely embodies something of perennial Christian truth.

One reason for our sympathetic view of the case of General Booth is that we do not care to see the Army become other than it has been. For more than a half a century it has practised the corporal works of mercy wherever such practice has been most needed: in the slums and on the fringes of all the great cities in the world. It operates in eighty-one countries, and the number of salvages it has effected in any one of them is impressively large. But to us quite as fine a thing as the results it has achieved is the spirit with which it has challenged the life and the philosophy of the modern world. No doubt the work can be carried on as well under a committee of three, a board of directors, a regularly elected leader, or whatever it is that the High Council intends to substitute for the now autocratic rule which carries with it as part of its power the right to appoint a successor. The Army's property and membership may continue to increase, but the wholly unworldly martiality which has characterized it in the past will be gone, for the most part, at least. The point is that a soldier ordinarily finds it much more difficult and complex to obey the will of the majority than the will of one who is his own majority and minority—that a general staff is, in this instance, possibly a poor substitute for a commander.

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And how much of the success of the Army can be attributed to its crusading air? We should say almost all of it. The Christian Mission which General William Booth founded upon its divorce from Methodism did very well for a decade or so, but its scale of operation was small. The day when he hit upon the declaration "The Christian Mission is a Salvation Army"—on that day the crusade as an international movement was born. Uniforms, drums and a flag! Posts and commanderies! Sergeants, captains and colonels! Prayer drill and councils!—councils of war against an invisible enemy. It was an idea which swept the world. Evangelism? Yes, and emotionalism. But if the intellect recognizes the values of the emotions appealed to, the appeal is also to the intellect. It was easy, thus, to answer the objections of those who deal with words and not ideas—and easy, too, to rest content with an over-simplification of the Christian faith.

But now if the Army is to go on an efficiency basis, much of its worth as well as its glamour may be lost. Discipline has its charms for men and women of such mettle as must be relied upon to hold the frontiers, and the more authority is concentrated—even authority to shape the course of the future—the more effective discipline will become. Who—if the General is deposed and the power to appoint a successor is taken away from his present office—who will discipline the members of the High Council?

WEEK BY WEEK

THE French reception of the Borah proposal that there be an international conference to recodify maritime laws and define the rights of neutrals on the high seas throws an illuminating light on the proposition and its allied subjects, which include most notably that of cruiser building. Nor is there singularity in the fact that their argument retroverts to the League of Nations. For France, the matter is a simple one. There will be no neutrals whose rights must be defined or protected. A warring nation, under the terms of the League, is the enemy of the signatory nations. It is true that these do not include the United States, but it is impossible to imagine a state of affairs under which the execution of the League stipulation would not achieve the same effect. The argument that such a conference is not necessary is obviously much more effective than the view of President Coolidge—that it is impractical in application. The British, too, are sceptical. They cannot be convinced, and quite understandably, that America would be willing to endorse the ideas about the freedom of the seas that might be embodied in any new agreement. The contemporary reluctance of America to commit herself to anything that savors of concrete international coöperation is a factor which must be given grave consideration. The fate of the cruiser bill is in such doubt that the amendment which Senator Borah added to it can be productive of no immediate good. Indeed Senator James Reed of Missouri has already complicated the possible discussion of the Borah plan by formulating an amendment of his own which would supplant the conference method with the making of separate treaties with each individual nation.

No Neutral in Wartime

THE arrival of March 4 will be a happy event in the lives of many who make their temporary homes in Washington. In the first place it will end the anomalous situation which has resulted in the division of executive power between Mr. Coolidge and Mr. Hoover. It will mark the adjournment of the present Congress. The Cabinet will have been selected and formal announcement of its personnel made. The new President will be able to call the Borah session of Congress, and will also be in a position to state unequivocally his wishes as to the measures that assemblage should consider. He will be able to effect what harmony is possible in a majority composed of Republicans by name but independents in principle. Had the Seventieth Congress shown greater good-will it could easily have transacted twice the business it has cleared from the calendar. Instead it has pursued so many tangential proposals, with the idea that what is not wrought before its death can be wrought several months thereafter, that the Republican congressional leaders will be forced to abandon their plan to make the special session a short one devoted to farm relief and the tariff. Senator Smoot's visit to the President-elect in Florida was designed to avoid the possibility of the special session's considering other matters, but the hope is a forlorn one. Mr. Hoover and the legislators can rejoice on March 4, but their jubilation must be over the fact that the ambiguities of the past session have been cleared, and that the new Congress can really buckle down to work.

The End of Executive Division

UNDER the chairmanship of Mr. John G. Agar, a dinner was given in New York City on February 11, and embellished with live talk regarding a matter of great importance. What is to become of the Cardinal Gibbons Institute at Ridge, Maryland, and what, more generally, is to be done for the Catholic Negro? The Institute, as everyone knows, was established to meet conditions actually obtaining in the rural South and to make possible the development of Catholic Negro leaders. For some time it looked rather like an experiment. Nobody had ever tried to do quite the same thing, and nobody was sure that the response on the part of the pupils themselves would be adequate. Today the fine record of achievement under the direction of Mr. Victor Daniel and his associates is a justification for the right kind of American pride. The Archbishop of Baltimore summed it up very modestly in a letter stating that

Aiding the Catholic Negro

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"in spite of many difficulties, particularly financial, the work has gone on with very satisfactory results." But the difficulties abide, and it is imperative (so all the sponsors of the enterprise agree) that some measure of endowment be secured. We understand that the committee which will cast its eyes about for such an endowment hopes to secure eventually a quarter of a million of the nation's dollars.

THIS plea for endowment may be considered a test of Catholic willingness to coöperate with the Negro in the solution of his problems. So far most of the money for the Cardinal Gibbons Institute has come from the poor colored parishes, and the flow is at present vastly more a dribble than a tide. Who will help? During the past months, The Commonweal has published quite a number of articles about the Negro. We purposely tried to make them as frank and matter-of-fact as possible, so that people might cease to think of the "Negro question" as something hazy and far away. It is a complex of social and economic conditions, of heritages from racial and political history, of spiritual needs and moral dangers. The way is clear to consider what the Catholic Church can give to the colored man and woman. More especially, how can it be done? Surely all such inquiries lead ultimately to thought as to whether the Negro can shoulder his own burden, carry the life of the Faith to his brethren, and promote the advancement of his race. In other words, the development of leadership is crucial, and leadership is indubitably the product of education.

Faith and Friendliness

ON THE last two days of January, a round table discussion of the relations between Catholics, Jews and Protestants brought many interested persons to Columbia University. The effort was sponsored by the National Conference of Jews and Christians, and received the heart-felt endorsement of President Butler. Those in attendance must have been impressed by the genuine spirit of anxiety and interest evidenced by many speakers. The question of how religious groups are to get on amicably and understandingly in our democracy was no academic detail to people who voiced grievances and expressed fears. Of course the discussion did not accomplish what it was professedly expected to. The organizers—including a singularly able and tactful chairman—wanted to list current misrepresentations, to analyze what is being done to counteract them, and to suggest ways of improvement. Most of the audience simply refused to be led down such paths. A considerable group kept coming back to the frank statement of actual differences and to the question as to whether these could really be resolved. Men and women, some of them engaged in the professions, wanted religious argument and exposition. They were resolved to learn "what is at the bottom of it all."

WE SINCERELY believe, for our part, that this interest in religious discussion for its own sake is a definite characteristic of the better American citizen. He may not always be well equipped for research or even for a battle of wits, but he does not want to soft soap the truth. Left to himself he will nurse a prejudice and cherish an acquired suspicion; but when he gets into the company of his fellows, he nearly always recognizes facts or logic. Because it promotes just this kind of discussion, the movement known as The Inquiry seems to us eminently hopeful. Its work is not positive, quite naturally, but it is genuinely destructive of prejudices and social antagonisms. From it the Catholic can learn a great deal. Nothing has done apologetic more harm than the notion that all opposition is unfair—that the "enemy" is concerned only with blackmail. On the other hand, nothing can do apologetic more good than to deal with religious interest as something which merits full coöperation, boundless charity and the widest knowledge one can muster. Conceived of in this spirit, the "lay evidence guild" is an American necessity.

A Word About the Press

FEBRUARY having been designated by American Catholics as press month, we may properly insert a remark or two at this point regarding a matter of particular importance to ourselves. It is impossible for any publication to succeed without the coöperation and good-will of thousands. During the past year The Commonweal, in company with several other publications of a similar character, has extended its influence and enlarged the number of its friends. Not a little of this progress may be attributed to developments in the recent political campaign; and we believe that the bishop of Harrisburg is wholly right when he declares that "during an experience that stirred deepest emotions and when opponents ofttimes overstepped the bounds of common decency, Catholic editors maintained their self-respect and self-control." It would certainly be a pity if the prestige thus gained were squandered, owing to restoration of the old feeling that the press is merely something one is expected to "shell out" for, something which is all right in its way—but the real purpose of which is to serve either as a soporific or as wrapping paper. We concede that much room for improvement exists, but we are likewise sure that all progress is community enterprise.

Drama in Antartica

WERE Othello alive today it is certain that he would never win Desdemona, for modern life has become so efficient that the tales of his exploits would have been stale long before he could have returned to lay siege to the fair lady's heart. Indeed the day-to-day accounts of high emprise which greet us in the daily press do much to rob them of their appeal and romance. The story of Perry's dash to the North Pole will always have a dramatic

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sweep which the minutely reported Byrd expedition will lack. It is impossible, naturally, to discern whether a different narrator could produce a different effect with the daily stories from Antartica in the New York Times. Nevertheless on February 2, the Times carried a story that was one of the most thrilling ever sent over the air, and it displayed this characteristic despite the writer. A climactic series of headlines and subheads was necessary to get the reader beyond the initial paragraph, which commenced with the Pollyanna statement that the ward room of the Byrd ship was "a jolly place last night." But the drama of that crumbling wall of ice, of lost moorings, of falling bergs, of giddy vortices, of careening ships, of man in conflict with threatening nature, triumphed over words and stood clear and stirring. It matters little to the reader that Byrd himself had to be rescued or that the man he attempted to save was not helped by the Commander's impetuous dive into the swirling and frigid waters. The heroism shines steady and true.

Mr. Coolidge to the Birds

SWEETNESS and light marked President Coolidge's dedication of the Bok bird sanctuary and singing tower in Mountain Lake, Florida. When the chief executive ended his peroration, Mr. Bok must have felt that in building the tower he has accomplished many things which were not originally in his mind. Was he surprised to learn that, as a sequitur, "the streets of distant towns will be cleaner, lawns will be better kept, a larger number of trees will spread their verdant shade over highways and homes"? The President indeed worked himself up to a fine pitch of admiration and recognition of the inalienable nobility of America. He concluded with "a spirit of thankfulness for the success of our institutions, which is here attested." There may be innate cynicism in the attitude that the tower does no such thing, or that it will not have the inspirational force which Mr. Coolidge so idealistically attributes to it. Why on earth should it? One rests content, however, that the birds, unspoiled by floods of oratory, will rejoice in a new sanctuary, and that the few hundreds of thousands who visit Mountain Lake will take quiet enjoyment in the music of nightingales and carillons heard in a beautiful setting.

Why Go to College?

DR. ADAM L. JONES, director of admissions at Columbia University, is worried because the colleges report an increase in enrollment of only 2 percent above last year. This is a much smaller increase than we have come to expect annually since the war, and Dr. Jones explains it by pointing to the diminishing birth rate. But since our increasing prosperity, by making education possible for a larger percentage, should offset the slight decrease in births, it is regrettable that lack of definite figures prevented Dr. Jones from taking account of a diminishing desire for college training on the part of the rising generation. May it not be that young men and women are learning to distrust the power of a university to give them the greater earning capacity which is so consistently held out as one of the major attractions of a higher education? No one will deny that the propaganda with which all high schools have been bombarded in the past fifteen years—such as the charts showing the imposing salaries earned by college graduates—has had much to do with the increases in college enrollment. Undoubtedly the charts were accurate as figures go, but in this case as in others it is possible that they do not go far enough. No statistician, for instance, can tell you what share in the conclusions reached by the charts was contributed by the professors, and what by the quality of the men who went to college during the period represented. And it seems to us that unless this can be determined, there is no morality in the argument which has been and is for thousands the only persuasion to a collegiate degree. If it can be established beyond doubt that higher education means a higher income, our schools need never fear a scarcity of students. Perhaps this is what Dr. Jones had in mind when he declared: "The growth of colleges is very likely to fall off still more in the course of a decade unless the values or other attractions of college training shall come to appeal still more widely than at present."

Publishers' Optimism

IT IS gratifying that the first month of 1929 found publishers and booksellers facing the world with cheerful confidence. Mr. Frank C. Dodd, retiring president of the National Association of Book Publishers, emphasized the prosperity which he and his associates have enjoyed since the war, and outlined good times yet to come. He named as the most extraordinary development in the post-war field the intensified desire for books of non-fiction. This new reaching out for culture and knowledge, in antithesis to the wish for unadulterated entertainment, unquestionably demands encouragement and support from publishers. They should forego the easy road of flooding the market with books whose subject-matter is sufficiently profound, but whose treatment is hasty and superficial. Their choice of manuscripts should be based primarily on the writer's authority to treat of the subject he has selected, and, above all, on his ability to throw new light on the theme he presents. We have had too many books which, exaggeratedly hailed by the blurb writers, utterly failed to meet the demand that has stimulated the publishing of books of science, philosophy, history and biography. Events only will show if the present demand is healthy and long-lived. We believe that it is. But we believe, too, that the publishers themselves have more than anyone to do with insuring its continuance.

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Mr. Harkness as Educator

NOT so many years ago the Harkness gift to Harvard, the exact amount of which has just been made public, would by its size alone have staggered the imagination of the world. But now even the fact that it is to be used for what is really an experiment in education seems not much more than a commonplace. We have come, of course, to feel that the only way out of mass education is mass endowment. At the rate our universities are growing we must either festoon their campuses with gold, or submit to an arrangement which demands that one lecturer and a couple of assistants be sufficient to initiate several hundred herded students into the mysteries of the higher culture. Mr. Harkness's eleven millions, to say nothing of the odd three hundred thousand that goes with them, will be used to provide a number of selected students with something like individual attention. Oxford and Cambridge have been mentioned daily in connection with this plan, but as President Lowell pointed out, an American school need not be too sanguine of achieving their success by copying their methods. What Harvard and Mr. Harkness propose, therefore, is a plan modeled partly after the English, but adapted to conditions of education in this country, the nature of these adaptations, however, being not very clearly defined at present. Unfortunately there is no precedent to serve as an example of what to attempt or what not to attempt. No results have as yet been forthcoming from the experiments conducted along this line by other American schools, such as the plan evolved by Glenn Frank and Alexander Meiklejohn at Wisconsin, of which we heard so much a short time ago and nothing since. Of course Wisconsin has no Harkness endowment back of its "college within a college."

George Gray Barnard's Art, Certainly

FOR most laymen and, we fear, for most artists, George Gray Barnard's definition of true art is as elusive as the thing defined. "The division of light and shadow through an infinite number of planes," Mr. Barnard declares, "is the secret of all living paintings or sculpture." This criterion is so sure to Mr. Barnard that he believes any dishonesty in art can be immediately detected by exactly applying it. But Mr. Barnard gives encouragement to the fakers by stating that he does not feel that there are "more than half a dozen artists today who have achieved the 'Great Eye' which is able to pierce the surface and perceive the gradations of light and shadow, which mean that the master has looked upon it." Of course Mr. Barnard has arrived at this stage. The proper humility lies in his admission that he has acquired the "Great Eye" only after fifteen years of hard work, during which he gazed at masterpieces for sixteen hours a day. Although he explains that the principle is extremely simple, his elaboration of it becomes more and more complex, so that one loses the force of his recommendation that students be given rooms in museums in order that they may work in constant sight of true masterpieces. Anyhow, the art world might put Mr. Barnard to great practical use by employing him to unmask frauds.

Literature for Children

WE AGREE with Dr. Herbert B. Bruner, who has spent four years trying to determine what literature should be read by school children, that most of the selections from the masters assigned in our primary class rooms are unhappily chosen. But upon carefully examining the schedule of readings prepared by Dr. Bruner to take the place of the time-honored selections, we must note that, while ample provision is made for amusement, no account is taken of the child's advancing intelligence. We take at random from the list Barbara Frietchie, and O Captain! My Captain!, which are proposed for the fourth grade. Good enough, but according to this standard where do Somebody's Mother, and The Barefoot Boy belong? In the second and third grades? No, indeed, says Dr. Bruner; in the sixth and the ninth. We might pause here to elaborate on the conclusion that Dr. Bruner's ideal pupils are doing their best work five years before entering high school, if we were not more interested in quarreling with his omissions than with his choices. It may be true that children especially dislike Alexander's Feast and Curlilocks—this is also true of many of their elders. It is entirely plausible that they despise Mr. Coleridge's Answer to a Child's Question—but that is no reason for leaving out The Ancient Mariner. Show us the lad of eight who will not respond to a proper recital of "The fair breeze blew, the white foam flew, The furrow followed free; We were the first that ever burst Into that silent sea," and we will show you one who is not interested in swimming and baseball.

THE METROPOLITAN MOVES

THE prospect of a new home for the Metropolitan Opera has been hailed with equal enthusiasm by true lovers of opera and by those who are interested, for more or less chauvinistic reasons, in the development of American music. For the first group, the abandonment of the old opera house is a necessity, however regrettable, imposed by the increasing host of opera-goers. For the second, the setting up in a new house means a parting with tradition and an anticipation of radical change in the presentation of opera in this country. They have, indeed, sought to effect this change for a long time past. The years immediately following the war, when German opera as such was banned because of a strained and silly prejudice, provided great encouragement for the group that has clamored most for presentation of foreign-language operas in English. It mistook the Metropolitan's bow to national exigency as a permanent policy, and pro-

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tests that librettos in English have not been made the standard have rumbled along the operatic horizon ever since.

A recent plea for "translated" opera was considered sufficiently insistent to merit a reply from Otto H. Kahn, president of the Metropolitan Opera Company. Mr. Kahn cited six reasons for adherence to the tradition—a tradition for which he is "duly thankful"—of giving operas in the language in which they were composed. He best meets the patriotic objection, however, by his statement that the opera, now an exotic thing in this country and in England, will "become a thing rooted in our own soil, but when and because Americans successfully compose operas to English texts." No fault can be found with the Kahn organization because it has not given sufficient and whole-hearted assistance to composer and librettist working toward Americanization. The criticism might well be that the Metropolitan has been too hospitable to those works, often of deadly mediocrity, which have been stamped as American. It is certain that the successful, purely American opera has not been written. The King's Henchman is the closest approximation, but despite the nationality of Deems Taylor, the composer, and Edna St. Vincent Millay, the librettist, the theme is of Arthurian England and the scoring belongs distinctively to no nation. An exact formulation of what actually typifies the American spirit must be made before the composer can go forward with his representation of that spirit, today, perhaps, more inchoate and diversely symbolized than at any point in the country's history.

It is most curiously characteristic that Americans should desire the tapering of an art into the narrowness of nationalistic bounds. An aspect of prime importance to art is its universality. Present-day opera is unquestionably universal in spirit despite the fact that it is most frequently given in Italian, German and French. There should be no demand that even the most intensely patriotic Americans be "complimented" by the use of English texts in the music of composers of other nations. The modernistic and radical tendency in other art forms—in literature, painting, architecture, sculpture, and even in many types of music—is not particularly concerned with recognition of geographical borders. It is concerned not with the adaptation of old classics to the prevailing spirit of the age but with the creation of new procedure in expressing that spirit. There is construction, not destruction or amendment, in its purpose. The experiment in opera, if experiment there is to be, should lie along this line. Debussy, when he wrote Pelléas et Mélisande, did not desire the junking of Verdi and Gounod, nor did Rimsky-Korsakoff wish for the banishing of Rossini and Bizet, when he effected the innovation of Le Coq d'Or. New life can be instilled into opera without extinguishing the breath it now knows. Such musicians have created authentic beauty which is deathless, despite the fact that impresarios for long periods may ignore them. The producers' duty to the public is to give such beauty visible and aural form.

This procedure need not be adhered to so rigidly that there will be no room in the operatic field for new work of merit by aspiring composers or for innovations in the mechanics of presentation. The criterion which the Metropolitan and like organizations should follow is that dictated by the form of opera as opera. There is no need to gratify the quest for novelty to such an extent that the impresario must go beyond his walls to bring back a composition which intrinsically does not belong to opera. Nor should he be made to feel that he must pander to tastes, jaded or revolutionary, which seek novelty for novelty's sake or spectacle and scenic juggling made paramount to the true art of music.

CATHOLIC ACTION AGAIN

THAT the idea of "Catholic action," as enunciated by the Holy Father, has an extraordinary appeal for many is demonstrable from the very considerable comment and inquiry which followed a recent Commonweal editorial on the subject. More could be learned, of course, from the mere temper of the vast quantity of opinion regarding this "action" which has been formulated in the European press. At length a question which has profoundly disturbed a veritable modern multitude has been brought out into the open. What is the status of the layman in the Church? What can he do, or rather what must he be, if his responsibility as a co-worker for the kingdom of Christ is not to prove a vain trust? These queries have been repeated with a frequency and anxiety impressive to all who follow the trend of religious living. And what strikes us as supremely beneficial about the papal answer is that it avoids finding a mere cut-and-dried formula—that it is really of the spirit, not of the letter.

The European discussion we have referred to makes it clear that "Catholic action" involves two reorientations of conduct which are virtually the ebb and flow of one principle. First comes an invitation to the layman, bidding him share the work of the apostolate in the spirit of that definition of the faithful voiced by Saint Peter—"ye are a kingly priesthood"; and there follows a direction that this new work be not separate from the general life of the Church, but intimately fitted into its hieratic ordering. Of organizations and confraternities there have been plenty, each pursuing with more or less success an especial purpose. "Catholic action" is not another one of these. It is based upon the truth, which an older theology stressed more fully than a more recent one has, that the source of spiritual life is a "self-sponsored receiving" of the virility of the Church—that the first great thing a man must do is not to act for such and such a purpose, but to prepare himself for larger, holier, more com-

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munal action. This preparation is impossible unless the layman does actually get into the current of the Church, not merely in the sense of doing a little for his own inner life but verily also in the hope of advancing the significance of the whole to which he belongs.

How this last hope may be stated in words of more than passing appeal seems to us evident in the following summary by Dr. Karl Muth, who as the leading Catholic lay editor of Germany, has been given unusual opportunity to observe: "The goal is to vitalize the spirit of the community and with this to make the dominion of Christ over life effective in practice. That means firm missionary activity in a highly civilized world, the conduct of which is inspired by ideas, points of views and symbols often propagated very brilliantly and suggestively. Intellectual primitiveness will be of no avail. It is, indeed, necessary to make virile precisely the spiritual energies and the constructive ideas of the Catholic world of thought—its doctrine of values, its concept of order, its veneration of human reason, its championing of natural law as the fundament of all positive legislation, its ideals of education and culture, its understanding of marriage, industry and property. On the other hand, the actual cultural elements of the time must be assimilated and transformed. One must possess the ability to understand other men, to talk their language and to present one's own store of wisdom in a manner appealing to them."

This whole program has, from time immemorial, been assigned to the layman as his own sovereign philosophy. Nevertheless it will crumble into so many words, will be stricken with deadly anemia, unless it is all discerned as part of the universal vision entertained by the Church of God. And so we arrive at the real core of the idea of Catholic action—the education of the layman. First, what shall he be taught is actually his function as a spiritual being? In how far is he subordinate, and in how far kingly? The answer is, we believe, that he must never presume to do those things for which the grace of an especial clerical sacrament is required. Nor must he attempt to usurp unto himself functions which the long experience of centuries proves can best be reserved to the clergy. We have no use for querulous criticisms of priests and bishops by those who would like a greater share in the regulation of financial affairs or who presume to know how "the parish ought to be run." Even in cases where bad example is given, the layman owes his pastor unlimited charity and forgiveness. This magazine has often been invited to air grievances or to print exposés; and we may as well say publicly that so long as the forces of those who have controlled this enterprise from the beginning suffice to maintain it, no word of these things will be uttered here.

On the other hand, the layman has an indisputable right to define himself as a Catholic entitled to receive the fulness of the life of the Church in accordance with his personality and his needs. He has a right, consecrated by every shred of tradition, to secure—wholly independently of financial matters or social status—all of beauty and truth and charity which are the legacy of Christ. No one can deny to him the privilege of rising to declare, "Before I can do, I must be—before I can work out the program ordained for me, I must have been given strength everlasting, and the right tools for the job." And when one asks whether all this is actually being accomplished, when one wonders if the life of the Church is really being conveyed to every leaf and branch, one is putting a question of sovereign importance not to one individual only, but to the whole communion of the faithful.

This question ought not, we profoundly believe, appeal to the clergy as being in the nature of a critique. It is really the beginning of an inquest. One might, of course, start the other way round. One might say: the world of the present is not Christian, is unjust, ignorant of truth, uncharitable. And why? Simply because the task of applying right principles and spiritual fervor to the multiform aspects of civilization has not been carried through. Since this is primarily the business of the laity, then the laity is at fault. The trouble begins in the home, where parents fail to realize their responsibility or live for pleasure's sake. It continues in the realm of business, where pitiless competition grinds the poor into the dust. You will easily trace it farther, this trouble, if you follow it down the routes of the mind, discovering what ideas, images, hopes are actually suspended before the minds of the people of God. And you may end with scorn of the world, with complaints that the layman is not doing his part, and with something like complacent retreat from the scene.

But now you come round to the other side of the inquest. Why is all this true? To a Church which profoundly believes that "all good power is of God," the answer is very simply that this power has not been absorbed. It lies beyond the gate-posts of eternity, or in the granaries of the Realm of Christ, and men go hungry. And one reason why these things are so is that a kind of barrier has been erected between the clergy and the laity. It is occasioned by the frequent inevitable impersonality of parish administration—in the circumstance that the faithful are not one body, but a crowd. More especially responsible, however, is the gradual decay of the communal aspects of our spiritual life. The liturgy is prayer in common, but we have forgotten the liturgy. Sermons are public meditations, but we have forgotten how to meditate. The priest—one realizes after having talked to many—cannot find his way to the people, nor can they discern the path that leads to him. One hesitates to say so, but when one has observed a little one knows that the supreme spiritual danger of America is that the sacred ministrant should become not a mediator, but a functionary. Small wonder that there should come home to us so earnestly the Holy Father's mandate of "Catholic action!"

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THE DUBIOUSNESS OF DROUGHT

By JOHN C. CAHALAN, JR.

THAT prohibition is a moral issue is the reason given for politics in the pulpit. Numerous quotations could be cited in proof of this.

On October 14, 1928, the Reverend Harry Emerson Fosdick delivered a sermon at the Park Avenue Baptist Church of New York City. He called it The Prohibition Question. In it he said:

> Nevertheless, the church has a weighty responsibility to speak about the prohibition question, for the church largely supported the various campaigns that issued in the prohibitory laws and cannot now with a clear conscience drop the matter simply because it has grown hot. . . . At the heart of the Christian conscience of this country there is a conviction—make up your mind to it—that the liquor traffic and the Christian Gospel stand for two diverse and contradictory conceptions of personal and social life.

In the recent campaign, the morality of prohibition was the defense of the preacher in politics. The evangelist, sensing that the course he was pursuing needed justification, fell back on the moral issue. The bolting bishops, led by Cannon and Mouzon, shouted it from the housetops. Prohibition was not only a moral issue, it was a Protestant issue. This was asserted and asserted again. On no other ground could the political parson qualify. There is no other ground—at least, in a country such as ours.

A primary duty of the church is, of course, to concern itself with morals. When churches or churchmen enter the lists of political battle they must do so as moralists. Thus, when the great Pope Leo XIII defined the rights of employer and employee, he did so not as an economist but as a moral teacher, for the simple and obvious reason that the rights involved were moral rights. The church may, and frequently does, use its influence in the direction of matters that are seemingly economic and nothing more. But it does so with an eye to the rightness or wrongness of the issue with which it concerns itself. Acting in this manner it needs no excuse for its apparent interference. As a matter of fact there is no interference.

Arguments, then, in favor of politics in the pulpit must derive their force from the morality of the matter under discussion. In the case of prohibition, reasons that are based on economics, on expediency, on utility and what-not may be all very well. But they cannot alone uphold morality. Preachers of the Divine Word should be the first to know this. Prohibition may or may not be expedient. It may or may not be useful. It may or may not have economic justification. But it must be essentially moral. Otherwise it is discussed in the pulpit with as much propriety as Muscle Shoals or a high protective tariff.

Forget for a moment the miserable hypocrisy that surrounds the activities of many professional prohibitionists. Lay aside the dishonest subterfuges and specious arguments of the pharisaical, and you are face to face with a fact that cannot be ignored. It is that, granting that prohibition is a moral issue, a conscientious leader must fight the good fight be the difficulties what they may. Take away the moral issue involved and you are confronted by another fact that is just as pertinent. It is that, when they deal with prohibition, the reformers are engaged in misrepresentation.

It is as moralists that the prohibitory churchmen enter, and it is as moralists that they must prove their case. This they have not done to date, for me at least, and millions like me. All admit the immorality of drunkenness. Law or no law, it cannot be else but sinful. It is immoral in its essence. But all likewise admit, and it conforms to the reasonable experience of men, that there is many a drink this side of intoxication. To talk of the return of the rum-seller, to prate of will-compelling habits, is but to befog the issue. The rum-seller, in most places, never went away. And there are millions of men, past and present, who drank—are now drinking for that matter—and drank temperately, intelligently and made a virtue of it.

It follows, therefore, that there can be no discussion of prohibition without a clear idea of what constitutes morality. There must be common ground for the idea of a good act and a bad act. That there is an essential difference between morally good acts and morally bad acts, all men are agreed. There are, of course, many and varied schools of morality. Men not only dispute over what is a good act and what is a bad act, but they are at odds over the norm by which such acts are so determined. However, their quarrels have no place here. What I am trying to do is to find out how Bishop Cannon or F. Scott McBride or Dr. Fosdick justify their contention that prohibition is a moral issue.

To me it has seemed in my humble gropings that the reason why my intellect approves certain acts and calls them good is because it perceives that they are rightly directed to their true end; that these acts are human acts (acts which I have the power of doing or not doing, as I please) and that, since these acts are suitable to and worthy of a rational agent and conformable to the exigencies of things, they ought to be done by me. That is, man ought to do what is conformable to his rational nature and conducive to his perfection. And the end is the Supreme Good to which by intellect and will I must tend. I further understand that moral good, which is conformable to reason regulating free acts, has a meaning, in a

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wider sense that embraces natural or physical good. Hence good, viewed as conducive to the attainment of another good, is styled useful; when it is considered as capable of giving satisfaction or pleasure to an appetite, it is named pleasurable. And the useful and pleasurable, when they are embraced by the will according to the right order of things and in a manner worthy of man, share in the nobility of moral good.

Now, since that is my understanding of moral good, it helps me not at all when I am told that Mr. Henry Ford has said that if prohibition is given up he may have to close his factory. That statement is of no aid in convincing me that prohibition is a moral issue. I might very truthfully retort that a former police commissioner of Detroit, Mr. Frank Croul, is my authority for the statement that under prohibition there were 10,000 blind pigs in the city during his régime. And I might add that there were no more than 1,600 licensed saloons in the county of Wayne, which contains Detroit, in the days before prohibition. Nor does it clear things up to tell me that big business in the United States is responsible for the Eighteenth Amendment. Big business is responsible for many things in this country, some of which even an evangelical moralist would find it hard to approve.

To refer to the natural law of conscience is but to confuse further, for conscience is nothing more nor less than a practical judgment of the understanding. It is virtually the conclusion of a syllogism, the major premise of which would be some general principle of command or counsel in moral matters; the minor, a statement of fact bringing some particular case of your conduct under that law; and the conclusion, which is conscience, a decision of the case for yourself according to that principle. Then, too, though this inner law is natural in the sense in which walking, speech and civilization are natural to man, it is not natural in the sense of coming to be in man quite irrespective of training and education, as comes the power of breathing. Since it is a human judgment, conscience is liable to err. It is not infallible.

With all this the moral prohibitionist may not agree. It is not material whether he does or not. What I am here trying to set forth is that there is, to me anyhow, such a thing as pleasurable good, say temperate drinking, and that good may very well share in the nobility of moral good. If this be true a genuine question of morals arises: the right of a minority to try to enforce the dictates of its conscience on the Philistines.

Senator Sheppard of Texas is the author of the Eighteenth Amendment. Yet he was forced, the other day, to oppose in the Senate an appropriation of $300,000,000 which Dr. Doran, prohibition commissioner, has declared necessary for the complete enforcement of the Volstead Act. He has not been censured by any of those who contend that prohibition is a moral issue. Is it that intelligent proponents of the movement feel that they have not made out their case with any degree of plausibility? If not, why the stress placed on the admitted abuse of the liquor traffic and the economic advantage of its supposed absence? Some day Dr. Fosdick is to propose a sermon from his pulpit on the thesis that moral reforms do not commonly succeed until the economic motive gets behind them. (The Prohibition Question, page 9.)

The business of mixing conscience with political lawmaking is a serious thing. It was not so very long ago that Miles Standish walked into the woods and put a stop to a Christmas celebration. The other day in Michigan they sent a woman who is a mother and a grandmother to the Detroit house of correction. She will serve a life sentence, unless pardoned. Her crime was the selling of a vinegar cruet full of moonshine whisky to a couple of thirsty strangers. Selling whisky in Michigan is a felony. She was convicted of four such crimes. Under its new criminal code, Michigan makes a sentence of life imprisonment mandatory for those convicted of committing four felonies. The case attracted country-wide attention and the protests were many—so many that it is probable that the legislature (now in session) will change the Michigan prohibition law and make its violation not a felony but a misdemeanor. That should give opportunity to the moralists for a very delicate discussion as to how the legislature can morally change the nature of a crime.

But the voice of the reformer was not used to swell these protests. Instead we find the Reverend R. N. Holsaple, superintendent of the Michigan Anti-saloon League, issuing a statement defining his position on the question of life imprisonment for liquor law violators. (The Detroit Times, December 16, 1928.) He says in part:

> The violator of the prohibition law ranks among the worst type of criminals in this country. The murderer usually commits his crime in the heat of passion or great excitement or provocation. The thief steals material things and only leaves his victim poorer from that standpoint. The bootlegger and moonshiner, with supreme contempt for all law, not only corrupts society, but he leaves his victim or patron in a weakened and poisoned condition and, as a rule, if pressed by officers, will commit crime in order to escape. He is a potential murderer.

Mr. Holsaple is not, however, in favor of making the drinking of liquor a felony. On this point the same paper quotes him as follows:

> Absolutely not. Prohibition is not aimed at the individual appetites of men. It is not an attempt to order by law what one can [sic] eat or drink. Prohibition is aimed at the traffic in intoxicating liquors.

Again the moral issue raises its head. It is immoral to traffic in liquor but not to drink it. We are a people of extremes. It was Gilbert K. Chesterton, I think, who told of the Russian who was obliged to kill his sister because her boots squeaked.

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WILSON AFTER VICTORY

By JOHANNES MATTERN

American destiny in the great war era is nowhere more fully revealed than in the documents collected by Colonel Edward M. House. Volumes III and IV of The Intimate Papers of Colonel House, arranged as a narrative by Charles Seymour (Houghton Mifflin Company: $10) deal with the ending of the war. No one could be more competent to discuss them than Professor Johannes Mattern, of Johns Hopkins University, whose work as a student of international polity is universally respected. He gives particular attention here to the decline of the Wilson ideal, beset by the implications of European secret treaties—The Editors.

THE two latest volumes of The Intimate Papers of Colonel House are so rich in matter and suggestion that it is exceedingly difficult to review them adequately. I can do no more than seize upon those phases of the leading issues and events which evoke my personal interest and concern.

There were those who disapproved of manner and method, but accepted as sincere the efforts of Wilson and House for a liquidation of the war which would ensure the lasting appeasement of the nations. They will find in The Intimate Papers of Colonel House evidence justifying their position. They will also find proof that, play their cards as they might, with the kind of partners they had, Wilson and House were foredoomed to failure.

If, among the revelations of these volumes, there is one more vital than the rest, it is the realization that the question of win or lose was dependent upon Wilson's success in persuading or compelling the allied governments to abandon the commitments of the secret treaties. For it was these commitments which vitiated any effort to acclaim the Wilson-House ideals as the war aims of the allied and associated powers. In the early stages of American participation in the war, House cautioned Wilson against any attempt at such persuasion or compulsion. It would cause resentment among the Allies and delay the work of organizing the coöperative machinery necessary for the rendering of the financial, economic and military aid essential to the prevention of immediate defeat. Balfour, on the other hand, representing the allied point of view on his mission to the United States, naturally sought to bind the American associate to these commitments. He succeeded in bringing the fact of their existence and their contents to House's and Wilson's attention. He told House that he would present Wilson with a copy of the treaties. Whether, therefore, Wilson was justified in stating, as he did in August, 1919, before the Senate Committee for Foreign Affairs, that he had no knowledge of the treaties as a whole before he reached Paris, is quite irrelevant in this connection. The documentary evidence is conclusive that both House and Wilson were acquainted with the contents of these treaties from the beginning of American participation in the war. The evidence shows that Wilson was greatly troubled about them, so much so that he frequently intimated his disapproval of the Allies' exorbitant territorial expectations, as for instance in his answer to the Pope's peace proposal and elsewhere. But House advised and Wilson agreed that the way to deal with this unpleasant issue with any hope of success was by indirection. In his answer to the Pope's proposal for peace and later in his speech containing the fourteen points, Wilson deliberately set about forcing the Allies' hand on the question of the secret treaties, his statement of American war aims being so phrased as to imply allied consent. The result was far from encouraging.

> So far as it laid down conditions which Germany must meet, the British press was unanimous in its praise, [but] in so far as the speech was designed to win from them [the Allies] a renunciation of the spirit of the treaties, it had no immediate effect.

The United States had entered the war without the official demand for the abandonment of the secret treaties. Defeat for the Allies would mean defeat for the United States. Such defeat, they well knew, Wilson could not contemplate. Hence the United States was bound to remain in the war—treaties or no treaties.

That was not the opinion entertained by House. Having advised Wilson against any disturbing attempt in that direction while victory was in doubt, he was equally urgent in his appeal for the strongest means of persuasion before victory should be achieved. Bring the Allies to a revision of their war aims while you can! That was the tenor of his letter to Wilson of September 3, 1918.

> Do you not think the time has come for you to consider whether it would not be wise to try to commit the Allies to some of the things for which we are fighting?

After this cautious question he becomes more emphatic: "As the Allies succeed," he warns, "your influence will diminish. This is inevitable. . . ."

With more optimism than success Wilson continued his efforts, stressing and enlarging upon the principles of the fourteen points as the basis for a just peace for victors and vanquished. Victory came with the German request for an armistice on the basis of Wilson's fourteen points. To grant the request on that basis meant the scrapping of the secret treaties. Wilson contended that the Allies' official silence, while the issue was in the balance, signified implicit acceptance of the American war aims as formulated in the

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fourteen points. Repudiation now that the enemy was helpless would be clearly a manifestation of bad faith. For the Allies the war was won. They now had the power to dictate their own peace. Why should they tolerate interference by an idealist, the President of a non-European state? In the end nothing less than the intimation of the possibility of a separate peace between the United States and Germany brought forth the reluctant and conditional acknowledgment of the fourteen points as the basis for the pre-Armistice agreement.

By that time Wilson had come to realize that only extraordinary measures could prevent the emasculation of the fourteen points in the coming peace conference. Hence his decision to be present at the conference, a decision which he carried out in the face of the urgent disapproval of House and others. As predicted by Frank Cobb, personal contact between the President and the allied Prime Ministers and Foreign Secretaries, who were already jealous of his power and resentful of his leadership in Europe, inevitably developed new friction and endless controversy. No opportunity was missed to harass and wear him down. They played him off one against the other, as had been the game of European diplomacy since the days of Metternich and Talleyrand. To be sure, they granted him his League of Nations, but at the price of the settlement to which he had committed himself in the pre-Armistice agreement. It was a regular seesaw of yielding and refusing. Having received his League, Wilson grudgingly yielded to the British, French and Poles on the freedom of the sea, the Saar Valley, the Rhineland and the Polish corridor. As a reaction from these concessions he felt that he must be firm against the Italian demands for Fiume. Having thus opposed Italy, he was urged by House not to hold out against Japan in the matter of Shantung. House wrote to Wilson:

> While it is all bad, it is no worse than the things we are doing in many of the settlements in which the western powers are interested. I feel too that we had best clean up a lot of old rubbish with the least friction, and let the League of Nations and the new era do the rest.

These were bitter days for Wilson, only less so than those which were to follow when his own people rejected his League. At Paris they did as House had feared, "pull Wilson down from his high pedestal." What he had sought to bring to men on earth was peace and good-will. What he secured was peace of a kind. It is only now, ten years after the event, that good-will appears in the offing, and only to the degree in which it shall prevail can the Wilson-House ideal become reality.

The revelations of the Intimate Papers do not impair the stature of Wilson, but they elevate the figure of House to a height commanding equal respect. While they reveal Wilson as possessing the loftier vision, they show that House's judgment was clearer and of the more practical kind. If they picture Wilson as sacrificing and suffering much for his faith in the ultimate efficacy of his ideal, they prove that in differences of opinion House the friend, in loyalty to the cause he had made his own, graciously yielded to Wilson the President.

The Intimate Papers do not by any means throw all possible light on the issues involved. Considering the space devoted to the freedom of the sea, reparations, the Saar Valley, the Rhineland, Fiume, Shantung, etc., one is left to wonder why such subjects as the Polish corridor, the Tyrol, "open covenants of peace, openly arrived at," should receive as little attention as they do. There is cause for disappointment over the failure to elucidate in more detail House's and Wilson's attitude toward the specific German counter-proposals as to both the League and the terms of peace. On the other hand, the editor deserves credit for his success in overcoming the handicap of the complete absence of any formal correspondence from Wilson to House, an absence all the more conspicuous in view of the amplitude of the communications of American and allied officials included. On the basis of his selections he has made the Intimate Papers not only useful as "raw material for history," but also readable as history itself. To borrow a phrase from P. W. Wilson's review of the Letters of the Empress Frederick, around the new material he has written what is, in effect, an excellent and inevitably a moving narrative.

To Our Lady in Winter

Lady, a transient stranger was the snow
In your far Syrian village,
Where vine and olive, in the sun's fierce glow,
Scarce asked the rich soil's tillage.

But how you would have smiled to see it, Sweet!
Here in the city's highway,
Hastening at dusk with soft and stainless feet
Down the long lanes of skyway.

It would have been so eloquent, I know,
In its untarnished pureness,
Of what you prized most dear, would not forego
For any honor's sureness.

Its soundless fall—a muting finger laid
On the great city's humming—
Would have recalled to you, O Mother-Maid,
The Spirit's noiseless coming.

You would have loved—how much!—to see it fling
A swift, a kindly veiling
Of pure compassion on each sordid thing,
Hiding earth's every failing.

Too soon it wears the grime, in lane and street,
Of traffic and of toiling;
But you, of all earth's daughters, Lady sweet,
Were snow beyond her soiling.

SISTER M. ANGELITA.

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A HAITIAN HOUSEWARMING

By PAUL BROWN

FOR more than an hour, as I followed the mere suggestion of a trail through the bush-covered Haitian mountains, I had heard intermittent strains of song—mere isolated bits of melody that sounded for all the world like choral music. I thought at first that I must be mistaken, for, according to my information, I was still hours away from the first little native hut on the trail. My horse verified my opinion, however, for I noticed his ears flick forward the next time I fancied I heard the music. Whatever it was, we both had heard it, and soon it was evident we were not mistaken.

As I rounded a bend in the trail the source of the music was apparent. Not two hundred yards ahead, in a little clearing that had been burned over so recently that embers were still smoldering, were fourteen blacks, working away with awkward, long-handled native hoes, their only agricultural implement except the machette. They were hoeing a strip about thirty feet wide, singing lustily, and using the strokes of their hoes to accent the cadence of their song.

I drew abreast of the clearing, and one of the natives approached, smiling a welcome.

"Bon jour, m'sieu," I was greeted pleasantly. "Will you have a cool drink?"

"Oui, merci," I replied, and dismounted, following the cheerful black as he led the way to the shade of an enormous mango tree, where there were several large spherical gourds full of delightfully cool water.

"And a drink for your horse, m'sieu. He is tired; you have traveled far, perhaps?" he hazarded.

"Yes," I agreed. "I have come far. I was not told that I would find a habitation here. Have you been here long?"

"But no," he answered. "Even now we are but making the garden. And as you see, my house has just been started. We searched the woods yesterday for the corner poles, and we had to burn them, as they are of the iron wood." The corner poles of his rising kai were indeed of lignum vitae. The omniverous little white termites would never cause the collapse of his house.

He glanced down the tiny valley where he had elected to establish himself. "Tash is coming now, for the roof, m'sieu," and he directed my attention with a wave of his hand toward two women carrying great loads of tash on their heads from the grove of palms a short distance away.

"Your wife?" I asked, casually.

"But yes, m'sieu," he answered, and then added with a cheerful grin, "both!"

The stride of the women, gracefully balancing their head-loads of tash, was almost regal. Each wore but a single garment, a short skirt reaching from the waist to a short distance above the knees. They threw down their loads of tash and returned without a word for more.

"You know the tash, m'sieu?" inquired my host. "It is the part of the palm which protects the little leaves from injury before they are ready to come out into the sunlight. Then they are pushed off the tree and die. True, they are hard and dry now, but when they are soaked overnight they will be quite soft and we can shape them easily. Ah, the tash, it makes a fine roof. Perhaps you know the tash roof, m'sieu?"

Well did I know the tash roof. Many times had I stood beneath an opened umbrella and jabbed away at the tash roof overhead for the mere amusement of seeing the centipedes, scorpions and tarantulas come tumbling down.

"And I shall have palm boards after the rainy season," he continued pridefully, "for but a week ago I burned down eight big palms. During the rains, as you no doubt know, the insides of the trees will rot, and then the tough outsides will make fine boards. True, they will have to be split," he added, sadly.

I sympathized with him. His hardships were great.

"But I will then have everything," he said, with satisfaction. "Of a certainty this is a fine place for a kai."

He looked about contentedly, and began to point out the advantages of the site. "Here there are four mango trees, m'sieu, which will be inside my bomba, for I am going to make the bomba of cactus, and then my garden will be really mine."

Whether he knew it or not, he was correct. Squatters' rights are very real rights in the mountains of Haiti.

He continued: "I already have twenty banana trees which were here when I came, which are already giving the fruit. There are seven plantain trees among them, too, as you can see."

I couldn't, but I did not interrupt. "I will have a good spring right there," he resumed, indicating a marshy spot which gave every embryonic promise of becoming a spring, "and the manioc is being planted tomorrow. We must have much manioc, for on the manioc cake one may travel far. Petite miel can grow there," and he indicated a level spot of about a half-acre. It was none too large, for petite miel is the indispensable substitute for both wheat and corn. It much resembles white Kaffir corn.

"Yams were already growing here when I came," he went on, and pointed many out to me. "Much coffee is growing up the mountainside just a little way, and almost a mile below there is fine cotton."

He reflected. "Of course, m'sieu, I do not yet have the oranges and the limes, but I have the grapefruit.

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But the grapefruit is not good for food, do you think?" he asked.

This question had been put to me so often that it did not surprise me. In fact, the native name for grapefruit is "fool orange" and it was never considered edible until the Americans were observed eating it. Even yet it is regarded dubiously. I assured him that it was excellent food. Resignedly he granted that even that might be so.

"No matter. Over there I shall have my sugar cane. I shall then be able to make the rapidou, the sugar. And of course, much rum. You know the tafia, m'sieu?" he inquired almost eagerly, as he reached for another gourd.

"Yes, yes," I hastily assured him. Tafia, the first distillation of the native stills, has so high an alcoholic content that it can be used as fuel for gas engines very satisfactorily. I had no personal experience with it as a beverage, nor did I care for any.

I steered my conversational course away from the liquid explosive. "You will have a fine kai," I complimented him.

He agreed with me that it would be sufficient. "I shall have everything I need, and shall spend my time resting. Of course, I will have no money, but what need I with money?"

"But you will have no meat," I objected.

"From time to time, I will have," he answered confidently. "I can trap the guineas and the pigeons, and I have some fish traps. There will be meat when it is wanted, for there are many gros fish in the pools of the stream you crossed this morning. I have some chickens, too—eight, I think. Perhaps there will also be eggs, who can tell? Truly, I shall have a fine kai."

He pondered a bit, and continued, "If there should be any pickaninnies I shall get me a goat, for the milk of the goat is good. But then I should have to work for three, maybe four days, and that is not so good."

I sympathized with him again since he seemed so very sorrowful, but I expressed my curiosity as to how he intended to pay the men then working in his garden.

His face lighted up. "Ah, m'sieu, for that they shall have a grand dance. This very night we will have the dance. I have much rum, and I have a gros tom-tom drum and a little tambou. There will be many guests—maybe twenty—and we shall dance by the light of a big fire until almost dawn. It will be payment enough. It is easy to forget tired backs and arms with the rum and the music."

He turned to me quickly, with the birth of an idea still visible in his eyes. "You would like to stay for that dance, m'sieu?" The prospect was inviting on the whole. I had seen many tom-tom dances in the Port, but in the interior mountains there usually is no dance if there is a "blanc" about. I had been told the dances were very different.

Regretfully I told him that I had to go on. He seemed actually disappointed.

"But," I added, "I am returning this way. If I find it possible, I will start this evening, and should be here about when the moon is highest. If I can do so, I will stop."

I tightened my horse's girth and mounted, returning the pleasant wave of the smiling black as I rode up the trail, involuntarily humming the rhythmic chant of the musical gardeners, deceiving their tired muscles with their interminable song.

Late that afternoon I reached my destination and completed my mission promptly, through the courteous assistance of the young marine officer in charge of the district. I accepted his invitation to dinner, and after we had eaten we moved our chairs out of doors to watch the marvelous sunset.

It is normal daylight in Haiti until the lower edge of the sun is about to touch the horizon. While the sun is actually sinking out of sight, gradually becoming less and less visible, the sky takes on a glory and diversity of coloring which defies the terminology of the artist, and almost immediately it is night. It seems that for a moment you turn your head away from the sunset to smile acquiescence to some unimportant remark, and when you turn back the beauty of the sunset has already been replaced by the drab hues of night. There is no dusk—the transition from light to darkness is abrupt and thorough.

The lieutenant was worried at my decision to ride back as soon as the moon rose. "Wear your gun," he advised. "You may not need it, but if you want it you'll want it quick."

"Really? I thought all that was a thing of the past."

"Ordinarily, yes," he agreed, "but these tom-tom dances are bad medicine for the gooks. They get full of rum and music, and they're just as liable to go nuts as not. Wear your gun."

During the next half-hour he regaled me with tales of tom-tom dances turning into voodoo dances, a transition that usually increased the number of his patrols for a short time, for voodoo dances were the beginnings of most of the trouble caused by the natives. He did not like the dances, for they might at any time start a general hell-raising. He permitted them in his district, but he did not know why. All of which served to strengthen my determination to see that dance.

A typical tropical moon was just rising when I left. It was as big as a dishpan and I am sure I could have touched it with a medium length pole. The night was bright and the entire country was bathed with a soft brilliance that made even distant things visible. The air was permeated with a lovely fragrance from the thousands of gay colored flowers that are perfectly odorless during the day, and there was a constant musical hum from the tiny insects that are active only at night.

I had been on the trail but a short time, less than two hours, when I heard the throbbing of a tom-tom drum, quite close somewhere. I stopped shortly at a

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little kai, and asked the native where the dance was in that vicinity. He listened intently for a moment or two, and said, "It is not near here, m'sieu."

"But the noise!" I objected. "It is close."

"Not so, m'sieu," he argued. "It is far away!"

"How far?" I asked.

"Not too far,' he replied, and that is about the most definite information any white man ever got from a native.

I resumed my ride down the trail. Why should I worry about the location of the dance, when I knew where one was to be held further on?

Yet the throbbing of the tom-tom never entirely ceased to be evident. At times I could hear it quite plainly, at other times not so clearly, but always, always it throbbed on. The trail entered the jungle now, and it was dark—so dark that I could not see my horse between my knees. I was entirely at his mercy, and I resigned myself, riding along hunched up in the saddle, thinking of the wonderful acoustic properties of a mere hollowed log fitted with a head of goatskin.

Eventually, at a bit past midnight, I clattered down the trail to the new garden. Strangely, the beating of the tom-tom was not nearly so pronounced as it was when I was a considerable distance away, but the lack of volume of the drum was more than made up by the shouting of the dancers.

There, surrounding a great fire, lost in the ecstasy of their primitive dance, were nearly thirty blacks, men and women. Tom-toms throbbed and gourds clashed in the wild rhythm of a Congo chant as they abandoned themselves to the orgy produced by the barbaric music and the rum. The dance itself was little more than muscular motions greatly exaggerated and occasionally varied with wild spinning to represent escape from a fancied captor.

Eyes rolling and glistening, bodies gleaming with sweat and tremulous with passion, the pleasant blacks of the morning had degenerated into the savages of the night.

Two became separated from the dancing crowd about the fire, and held the attention of the others as they writhed with ever greater abandon. They were shouted encouragement and gourds of tafia were thrust into their hands. The incessant throbbing of the tom-toms became faster, and the shouts became louder. The sharp clash of the gourds injected a harsh note of stridency into the overpowering volume of sound, and after spinning frantically to meet the increased tempo, the pair fell exhausted. And now the others with a wild shout turned back to dance themselves with renewed fury.

I had seen enough. As I rode away from the clearing, the woods thinned into the usual brush of the lower mountains. The silvery moon, riding overhead, flooded the entire country with its fairy radiance and the perfume of the flowers became pronounced again. A falling coconut crashed and rattled through the foliage on its way to earth and clattered down the mountainside, audible over the hideous, incessant throbbing of the tom-toms behind.

THE NEW SAPPHO

By ERIN SAMSON

I REMEMBER as a child shocking some French ladies by telling them that I wished to be a writer. In their conservative minds penwomen were associated with dreadful things like free love and trousers à la George Sand. Madame de Sévigné, after all, was only a mother writing her immortal letters for private and filial perusal. It must be confessed that, on the whole, French women did not glorify in their lives, or in their books, the more domestic and moral virtues of their sex. In fact they liked to hide their femininity, and only revealed it unconsciously by the nervous intensity of their emotions.

Until the period of the great war one could safely wager that the lady celebrity one was meeting at tea would not be quite normal. The blemish might be ever so slight: dyed ringlets reminiscent of Elizabeth Browning, or starched collars; but it would be there inevitably. The reason was plain: the poor creatures were not sufficiently sure of themselves to be natural. And now they are!

Moreover the French woman of letters has at last achieved a deeper and better originality; she has brought to the literature of her country qualities which men could not supply simply because they were men and not women. In poetry women have revealed themselves most completely, as the field is naturally lyric and subjective. The two outstanding women poets of the younger generation are extremely interesting because of their talent and because of their new independence which smiles at the tenacious Sapphic traditions. The one, Henriette Charasson, refuses to burn in fitful despair; she gleefully proclaims that her muse is hymeneal and maternal, her mood contented. The other, Marie Noël, ignores the common conception of love songs: she is Diana, untamed and shy, fleeing bonds for radiant freedom, fleeing company for the poet's richer solitude.

Modern readers were surprised and some of them distressed when Madame Charasson, serious writer and critic, published in 1919 a volume of poems entitled Waiting, and in 1926, Hours Before the Hearth. She wrote of love "under the lamp in the warm living-room of orange and blue." She thanked God for her husband! However one could not make

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fun of her, for her technique was excellent. Moreover it was modern, and she was soon recognized as the best disciple of Claudel, in imitation not of his powerful symbolic themes, but of his large rhythms and free movements. It was actually his poetry which inspired her to take up the housewife's pen.

If Henriette Charasson had written only light lyrics she would have been classed as a minor Francis Jammes, playing on delicate but oldish pipes. She was not content, however, to be merely charming, she dared attack the subject on which the whole of French poetry had been discreetly silent; for there is one mystery, the mystery of birth, before which the boldest man bows and passes on. Undoubtedly tact and delicacy are essential in the poetic treatment of motherhood. From an artistic point of view it would be disastrous to burden a poem with obstetric detail. Although Madame Charasson never sins by prudery or awkward omission, yet she never jolts us by unnecessary intrusions of naturalism.

This year she continues her poet's diary in the volume Two Little Men and Their Mother. Some of the verses are in the vein of A. A. Milne, but there is also a profounder note, that of a woman highly sensitive and thoughtful, who remembers in the midst of beauty the never-absent shadow of death. Like the Shakespeare of the Sonnets, who begged his friend to preserve his youth and loveliness in a living memorial, Henriette Charasson finds consolation in the ancient reasoning:

> Brother, one must grow old, but I shall not, altogether,
> From old rose trees young shoots grow, proud and strong.

Two Little Men is a book of children at play in old gardens, of poplars murmuring by fresh streams, of low-hanging apple trees; the pieces are so many exquisite miniatures of a family and a countryside, moving through the recurrent circles of seasons and years. Each gift of life, however, is accepted by the woman who is capable of expressing her sorrow with power and her joy with lightness.

Marie Nöel is equally heedless of feminine fashion in poetry; she also writes frankly, but not of conjugal felicity. On the contrary she cries,

> My father would marry me—
> Let us run away, away by the woods and the plain!

Her attitude is not anomalous; it was symbolized by the Greeks in the huntress Diana. We know it, modified in Joan of Arc and Thérèse of Lisieux, heroines who are by no means undeveloped emotionally. Indeed their hearts are on fire, but before other altars than the domestic. Marie Noël sings to God.

Her masterpiece, Vision, is a religious poem, which the Abbé Bremond considers the finest of our modern age after The Hound of Heaven. It is too beautiful to mangle in translation, that journey of the poet soul to paradise where it finds itself over-sinful for the company of the saints, but—superb daring—asks the King Himself to come with it into the furnace of purification. The Abbé Bremond remarks that the last stanza has the same language and rhythm as the last lines of The Dream of Gerontius, but he is afraid to reopen Newman for direct comparison, fearful lest the scholar's poem lose its enchantment in the presence of the young woman's spontaneous soaring.

There are two verses of Vision which inform against their elusive and retiring author. They sketch her portrait more sympathetically than intentional biography could:

> She passed her beautiful mornings doing nothing—
> And her evenings at dreams,
> As though, Master, we had no other business
> And no soul to save.

Marie Noël is probably the only living French poet who quickens the fancy with the skyey dreams and windblown rhythms of Shelley and Thompson, and yet her genius is less heralded than the cleverness of glib versifiers. But the poet with the sweet-sounding name is literally a nymph who flies from fame and does not even trouble to publish her verse. Her practical-minded admirers supplicate in vain for a more business-like procedure; they are lucky if she sends them a poem a year for their reviews. One man in Paris knows her well—fortunate person! The rest of the world knows only that she lives in Burgundy and that it is always difficult to get hold of her poems, Songs and Hours.

Her verse is extremely musical, often its music is that of old folk-songs and village rondels. Some of the earlier work is careless and hackneyed in phraseology, but the best of it reaches the heights of greatness with the ease of natural genius. Not that its author impresses one as unlettered, rather she appears to possess the most exquisite sort of education which keeps her poetry rightly balanced, erudition in the faint background.

Thus two women, leading quiet and provincial lives, describing their spiritual experiences without embellishments, have made a definite contribution to French poetry. They are the new Sapphos, caring less to startle than to move, preferring obscurity to cheap publicity, and traditional sentiments to clever affectations. Old-fashioned in their articles of faith, they are modern in their brave expression of them.

Omnipresence

> Far to creation's utmost bound
> This melody moves on
> As chant of the immortals all
> Loud-echoed in the dawn.
>
> And through and through the universe
> Is with its rhythm shod—
> This miserere of the saints,
> This song of songs of God.

S. Twyman Mattingly.

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MODERNIZING THE VATICAN LIBRARY

By IGINO GIORDANI

PIUS XI began his jubilee year on December 20, 1928, by saying Mass in Saint Peter's in the morning, and inaugurating the new wing of the Vatican Library in the afternoon.

During the latter ceremony he went up and down through the stacks and on the new staircase; for more than an hour he carefully examined everything: the architecture of the new hall, the courtyard of the Belvedere, to which a new entrance has been opened, the American furniture sent and arranged by a New Jersey company, the catalogue formed by cards of the Library of Congress and worked out chiefly according to the files of the American Library Association code. This inauguration, which seals one of the most glorious facts of his Pontificate, associates the most ancient library of the world with the American libraries, which are the most modern. These have given of their experience and means in a way that cannot be forgotten.

Mr. William W. Bishop, former director of the reading-room of the Library of Congress, now librarian of the University of Michigan, was the first, I think, to establish relations between the American and the Vatican libraries. In his volume, The Backs of the Books, he mentions his trips to Rome for study, and the hearty welcome which he received from such learned librarians as Franz Ehrle, now a Cardinal, and Monsignor Giovanni Mercati, now Librarian (Prefetto). They exchanged there the first ideas of a closer coöperation in the interests of scholarship. Dr. Butler, president both of Columbia University and of the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, gave his support to the idea, rightly believing that international peace might be promoted by international coöperation for intellectual purpose.

Then, in May, 1926, Dr. Henry S. Pritchett visited the Library and arranged a plan of work to which the Holy Father agreed. The following year one of the most learned *scriptores* of the Vatican Library, Monsignor E. Tisserant, came to the United States, visited the most important libraries and met the outstanding authorities in librarianship; and, with the Pope's assent, it was agreed that four American librarians go to Rome and four from the Vatican Library come to the United States. In August, 1927, Monsignor H. Benedetti, Dr. Scalia, Dr. Bruni and the present writer came, through the courtesy of the Carnegie Endowment, to the United States, where they received the finest hospitality. The former two worked at the Library of Congress for six months, the latter followed regular courses of library service in the University of Michigan and at Columbia. In America the library is an institution for readers, in Europe an institution for books. The main aim was to combine American policy with the needs of an old library which possesses tremendous treasures of manuscript and bibliography not available to every reader.

In February, 1928, four famous librarians left for Rome: Mr. Bishop, Mr. Charles Martel of the Library of Congress, Mr. James C. M. Hanson, librarian of the University of Chicago, and Mr. William M. Randall of the Kennedy School of Missions library in Hartford; and the practical coöperation started. American and Vatican staff members, with the help of Mr. J. Ansteinsson, of Norway, and of Mr. Miiton E. Lord, of the American Academy in Rome, discussed, studied and planned the new cataloguing room and the new catalogue for printed books; and in the spring the American guests departed from the Vatican, leaving a lasting monument of their ability and a grateful memory of their coöperation.

The Holy Father takes the most direct interest in the working out of the new catalogue. A librarian himself, he can estimate its value to the full. This value is growing with the development of the Library. The large courtyard of Belvedere, built up by Bramante, was changed into a lovely garden by Senator Luca Beltrami, one of the best-known architects of Italy today. The beautiful fountain erected by Paul V, was altered as well, so as to reproduce the ancient fountain that played in the piazza of Saint Peter's before Bernini's arrangement. The long wing of the palace built by Julius II was given over to library stacks. It is all in all the biggest achievement since the enlargement by Sixtus V, so that the name of Pius XI should be put among the founders of the Library: Nicolaus V, Sixtus V, Leo XIII.

Many people wonder whether old Europe ought to learn from young America the art of libraries; but when they see how simple and practical its methods are, they realize the value of such library management. In Paris I met Mr. De Vos and Mr. Prezzolini, leaders of the International Institute of Intellectual Coöperation by the League of Nations; and they showed me how interested they are in our work of recataloguing according to the modern rules, which will give a magnificent and manageable tool to the students of every country. Mr. Prezzolini wrote that a library without a catalogue is like a well without a pail: and he referred to the antiquated systems of some European libraries. Now the "Vaticana" is a rich and deep well, which has many a pail: just consider the catalogue of its manuscripts, Greek and Latin, Copric, Arabic, Ethiopic, etc. Within the year twenty volumes of this descriptive catalogue will be printed. At the same time there will be resumed the series of phototyped editions of manuscripts which began in 1889 and spread the knowledge of such treasures as, for instance, Virgil (Codex Vaticanus 3225)

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the Codex Vaticanus 3868 with the illuminated comedies of Terence, and the only existing copy of Cicero's De Republica, which Cardinal Angelo Mai discovered from the Vatican Palimpsest 5757. With the list and description of the incunabula, this is a huge bibliographical work; but the Vatican manuscripts number about sixty thousand, and the incunabula at least seven thousand, so much remains to be done.

A catalogue has also been begun for the printed books of the Vatican Library which will be probably the most modern in Europe. The "Vaticana" is composed of about twelve funds, with as many catalogues. Therefore the main problem consists in collecting into a single list the different funds, independently of their location in the shelves.

This catalogue is being worked out on these lines:

1. Adoption of Card L., the standard card printed either by the Library of Congress or, with the same size and rule, by the Vatican press.

2. A depository catalogue composed of the entire set of cards printed and given as a gift by the Library of Congress.

3. A general public catalogue (the American dictionary catalogue) which registers a book under its author, its subjects and eventually also under its title.

4. An official catalogue, essentially the same as 3, above, but reserved to the staff for technical and administrative use.

5. A systematic or classified catalogue: a list of the books arranged according to the adopted scheme of classification.

6. Adoption of the classification scheme of the Library of Congress and of its subject headings, with the necessary modifications.

For the fine reference room, built by Leo XIII and Cardinal Ehrle and rich with 70,000 volumes:

7. A particular alphabetic catalogue by authors.

8. A particular systematic catalogue, a kind of shelf-list of the books as they are located in the shelves.

Now, if you add to the foreign system the experience acquired by the Vatican staff itself through a long series of librarians, from Platina to Mezzofanti, from Mai to Achille Ratti, you can get an idea of this work. The present librarian, Monsignor Mercati, one of the most learned scholars in Italy, who was called to his office by Pius XI, showed such ability that Mr. Bishop, lecturing last May to the library students of Columbia University, said that he would propose some of Mercati's remarks at the next meeting of the committee for cataloguing rules.

Through this work, promoted both by the Holy Father and by intelligent Americans, young and old, elements meet on a ground of high understanding, and show how perennially young are books and the knowledge. Here in the Pope's library one cannot but realize the human and social value of this communion of spirits upon noticing, for instance, the volumes of the American Historical Association, or of the Smithsonian Institute, or of the Catholic University of America, or of the Universities of Chicago, Michigan, Harvard, etc., awaiting a student under the same roof which covers Virgil's manuscripts of the second, third, fourth and fifth centuries; or Henry VIII's letters to Anne Boleyn; or the maps and documents of the first explorers, Aquinas's handwriting, Boccaccio, Luther's autographs, original Raphael drawings, Michelangelo's sonnets, the letters of a mikado of the sixteenth century. Modern works are available together with bulls of Gregory VII; Galileo's verbal process, together with old artistic curiosities of emperors of Siam and Russia and presidents of republics.

Culture has a power that transcends times and distances and exceeds races and hatreds; it is indeed, in a human way, as Catholic as the Faith itself.

Two books are now on my desk for cataloguing: the illustrations of the Homeric fragments of the Biblioteca Ambrosiana of Milan, by the librarian Achille Ratti, now Pope; and the seventieth edition of The Faith of Our Fathers, sent to Pius X with an autograph which runs: "Beatissimo Patri Pio PP.X cum filiali reverentia et obsequio. Jacob card. Gibbons. Die 7 Mai, 1909."

Therefore, to the many Americans who visit this library I am right in saying that here they find as a fine memory, at least, a portion of their great country.

JONNY SPIELT AUF

By GRENVILLE VERNON

JONNY SPIELT AUF, with 200 performances in Germany during the past season, and perhaps as many others in the adjoining countries, might well be a portent. No other new opera of the last decade has so instantly caught the European imagination, and it may be possible that its trans-Atlantic success will be duplicated in America now that it has been presented at the Metropolitan Opera House. It might be a portent of a number of things—of the beginning of a jazz school of opera, or of the final deliquescence of all opera; of the recognition of the need of a return to more ordered musical and aesthetic standards, or of the complete triumph of the sensualism and discord of a mechanistic and soulless age. In fact in Jonny there is anything you may wish to find.

To some this may hint that it is not a portent at all, but only the production of a very clever musician who knows how to trim his sails to every wind of current doctrine, and with his eyes on the box-office and his tongue in his cheek, to steer his preposterous looking craft into the favor of opera audiences of all kinds and tastes. There have been "Jonnys" of this sort in every age and in every country, and in dealing with them it is well not to let the moralist have the upper hand, but to be a humorist who can enjoy what there is to enjoy and let those who would search for undermeanings search for them if they find any pleasure in it. So it is that Jonny Spielt Auf may well be simply a sort of glorified Follies—that is in intention—for at the Metropolitan, at least, this intention does not quite resolve itself into fact.

Ernst Krenek is a master of the modern orchestra—this at least is certain. He set out to write a jazz opera, and his jazz is effective jazz. He has fancy and rhythmic invention and a sense of color both in his action and in its musical expression. He introduces a glacier which sings, a loud speaker, a movie

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film, a railway train, an automobile, and a huge clock which becomes a revolving globe on which Jonny fiddles wildly while below him the world jazzes deliriously.

This is all very modern and very amusing, though it would, at the Metropolitan, have been far more amusing and modern had Mr. Urban's scenic investiture shown the slightest spark of imagination. Mr. Urban's train and automobile belonged thirty years back in the days of the Drury Lane melodramas, and their stolid realism utterly ruined the atmosphere of unbridled speed intended by the futuristic composer. Mr. Krenek intended these scenes to be funny, but he did not intend them to be ridiculous. Then again under Mr. Urban the final apotheosis of jazz was given à la Ziegfeld. The composer had wished here to show the triumph of sensualism and Negroid barbarism over the old standards of the Caucasian race, and Mr. Urban did it by giving the whole scene a background of the stars and stripes. We will leave the mere matter of good taste aside; Mr. Urban might retort that Jonny Spielt Auf is in itself the denial of that taste; but this method of handling this most important scene obscured completely Mr. Krenek's meaning.

Those who saw the German productions said that, in some of these, at least, they did things far better, because the scenic artists and the stage directors realized that they were dealing with an imaginative and not a realistic subject. It seems a pity that when America has such able native scenic designers as Robert Edmond Jones, Norman Bel Geddes and Lee Simonson, the Metropolitan should not have turned to them. Mr. Urban is an able stage artist in the realistic manner, but he is not an innovator nor even an appreciator of innovation.

In the matter of the individual artists, however, the Metropolitan's production was admirable. Mr. Bohnen's cat-like Jonny, despite the handicap of being made up as a black-face comedian instead of a true Negro, was admirable; and Miss Easton, though not in face or figure or temperament the ideal Anita, was surprisingly good. Miss Fleisher's Yvonne, Mr. Kirchhoff's Max, Mr. Schorr's Daniello, Mr. Meader's Hotel Manager, and Mr. Gabor's Impresario were all excellent, while Mr. Bodanzky conducted the orchestra with gusto and authority.

Jonny Spielt Auf is, then, good entertainment, yet it would be unfair even for those who consider it little more than this to dismiss it with a shrug. The very fact that such a work can be enjoyed by hundreds of audiences and discussed seriously by them means something. Whatever may be its definite intention, its very existence is a fact to be considered, and Jonny thus becomes not a portent of something to come, but an example of what is already here. The real problem it presents is not what the opera itself expresses, but what the public is willing to have it express. Of course the Metropolitan production, by de-Africanizing the chief protagonist, finds a superficial alibi for itself; yet the real meat of Jonny is not that Jonny himself is a Negro, but that the spirit which he typifies has eaten so deeply into the body of the white race that such a work as Krenek's has become possible of general acceptance. Whether the composer himself believes or does not believe in the virtue of the triumph of animalism, he is confident that the battle is on. Whether his Jonny is a warning or a paean does not really matter. What does matter is whether civilization and Christianity are prepared to fight for their very existence, whether they are fully aware of what the triumph of Jonny would mean. For whatever its other qualities, good or bad, may be, animalism is at least honest enough to proclaim beforehand that it will give no quarter.

THE PLAY

By R. DANA SKINNER

Serena Blandish

EVEN the magical notation that this is "a Jed Harris production" cannot obliterate the fact that Serena Blandish, a "fabulous comedy" by S. N. Behrman, based on the novel by the same name, is really a fabulous bit of ineptitude, garnished with lovely settings and a number of tinkling epigrams. It is a thing of bright spots and dark patches, with the dark predominating, and about as pointless as a toy balloon.

Resorting to a nice old habit, which really should be generally revived, the play has the subtitle of The Difficulty of Getting Married. But that subtitle is only a snare and a delusion for the unwary who may be led to think that Serena will somehow be led to the altar before the final curtain of the ten scenes. The real difficulty is that Serena does not particularly care whether she gets married or not, once she has fallen wholly and foolishly in love, so that when the play has said everything it knows how to say about the hollowness of modern life, Serena joyfully runs off with a good-for-nothing young man—an unawakened and wholly unimportant young lady who has learned nothing and who will probably never learn anything.

It is a curious truth about the theatre that, except in farce, the main characters in a play must have a certain inherent importance if the play is to hold interest or spontaneous attention. An apparent refutation of this statement can be found in the large number of successful comedies in which the characters are purposely mediocre if not imbecile. But on second thought, you will generally find that they achieve importance through representing a strong numerical type. A fool can become important on the stage if we all know many fools like him. A selfish woman like Craig's wife is important simply because we find her multiplied everywhere. But where the character is unusual or erratic, it must be so in a solidly important way if we are to catch any real breath of interest. A very intelligent woman, for example, may do a very unusual thing, in which case it becomes important simply because she is intelligent. But when someone who is consistently a fool ends up simply by doing one more foolish thing, and in an untypical way, then we have a right and an instinct to inquire, "What's it all about anyhow?"

Serena Blandish is one more variation on Cinderella, so far as her outward circumstances in life go. There is an indication in the text that she has been rather free in her affections, without its having led to marriage. She is, in fact, suffering from the ever popular "inferiority complex"—and when a certain jeweler who likes human experiments quite platonically provides fine feathers for her for a month, placing her in the home of a most cynical lady of leisure, Serena, contrary to his expectations, finds it just as difficult as ever to bring eligible men to the point of proposing. In fact, she ends up by falling in love with the impoverished son of a butler, and running off with him, apparently convinced that nothing but love matters after all and that marriage just isn't worth considering. She ends as she begins—and there you are. Who cares? A fool and her morals are soon parted, and no amount of smart dialogue and no plethora of sophisticated situations can alter the essential stupidity of the story or its heroine.

Occasionally a play of this sort is saved by having some one character with whom the audience can identify its own feelings or viewpoint. Serena Blandish is minus such a character—although the mysterious butler, so smoothly played by A. E. Matthews, was probably the author's candidate for this favor. But the butler evaporates when, at the last minute, he admits

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to being one of those paragons who has never let his son know his true origin, etc. In other words, he then and there becomes unreal, even beyond the limits permitted by a "fabulous" comedy. And thus we can do no more than compliment Constance Collier on a brilliant portrait as Serena's temporary chaperon, and add that Ruth Gordon as Serena, while full of all her best-tried tricks, does not even convince us that Serena is what the text says she is. Henry Daniell does a delightful bit as a bored and disillusioned nobleman—enough to constitute a one-act vaudeville sketch and no more. Perhaps the authors simply wanted to convey the thought that the whole world is wrong about everything and that nothing much matters anyhow. If so, it is certainly true that their play matters least of all. Robert Edmond Jones's settings, as always, are perfection. (At the Morosco Theatre.)

Merry Andrew

LEWIS BEACH, author of The Goose Hangs High, has written here a reasonably amusing comedy based on the idea that a man who has given his entire life to work without play finds it a mental impossibility to retire and enjoy the leisure he has earned. Andrew Aiken, a middle-western druggist, is the target of Mr. Beach's benevolent satire, and becomes, thanks to Walter Connolly's superb characterization, a person of some general human importance. The other characters are much less clearly drawn and seem to me to fail in one essential of "human comedy": the things they do and say are more or less conveniently arranged to prove a thesis. They are types rather than individuals. Mr. Beach does not clothe them with the warmth of individuality, and although they are supposed to suffer from the unbearable conduct of Andrew, once he has retired, you seldom feel a sympathy for them greater than for characters in a comic supplement.

In the story itself you find just the kind of theme which the Quintero brothers in their charming Spanish plays would develop to the last degree of warmth without sentimentality. But the Quinteros have masterly skill in concealing their own viewpoint and letting their characters live before you. As Mr. Beach himself assisted in the direction of the play, we cannot suppose that his intention has been spoiled through improper production. One must confess that the lines themselves seldom open up the opportunity for rich characterization. The treatment, in other words, is a little thin and cold, as if Mr. Beach had never quite tried to feel with or for his characters, and had put them through their paces with a certain punctilious discipline.

Perhaps this criticism is a little uncalled for in a comedy that has many sparkling moments and only a very few arid spaces. Moreover it is a clean-cut affair, of the kind we see so seldom these days, full of acute observation and with occasional flashes of real wit. But if these plays of a healthier type are to regain their rightful place in the modern theatre, they must be done supremely well, or there is danger of their losing caste once more. People are perfectly willing to crowd the theatres for simple entertainment. They are not exacting as to novelty of idea. But you can ask them to respond generously to plays of this type only when the human qualities are fully developed and the author drops all hint of superiority to his characters in favor of breathing sympathy and life into them. Mr. Beach has succeeded in doing this only in the case of his central figure, and he has been ably seconded by Mr. Connolly's acting. The rest of the cast do little to cover up the aridity of their lines, with the result that the situations are more amusing and interesting than the people in them. (At Henry Miller's Theatre.)

Little Accident

HAVING missed the early productions of this comedy by Floyd Dell and Thomas Mitchell, I can only now submit this belated report on one of the box-office successes of the season. I shall probably call down upon me the wrath of all the "civilized and sophisticated" who may chance to read these lines when I say that it is just one more example of the type of play that can conceivably do vastly more harm than a dozen serious affairs like Desire under the Elms.

In the first place, taken purely as a bit of writing for the stage, the comedy, Little Accident, is undoubtedly sparkling and diverting. It squeezes the last drop of mirth from every situation and often gallops away into hilarious farce. The trouble is that in its utter falsity to the realities of life, so far as its main theme goes, it turns all values topsyturvy.

On the eve of his wedding, Norman Overbeck (Thomas Mitchell) learns by letter that he is to become a father as the result of an earlier infatuation. The infant in the case gives the title to the play. All the situations, including the final reconciliation of the mother and father and their prospective marriage, spring from this central fact. In order to give events plausibility, it is necessary to believe that Overback's fiancée and all others in his path are of that indifferent breed of manikins who can be jockeyed into any situation that the author finds convenient. There is, if you want to hunt for it, the general implication that parenthood brings its own sense of responsibility, but in arriving at this conclusion you must thread the maze of sophistries through which a cardinal fact of life is made to appear a hilariously funny incident. If there is any one thing from which modern life is suffering—and tragically, too—it is failure to see life through, to understand the interaction of events, the tragedy which may spring from carelessness and unbridled egoism, and the responsibility which goes with every human act. The philosophy of the day, in its individualism, presupposes that we live in a vacuum, that each man is a law unto himself. And the mood in which Little Accident is written and carried out supports that current sophistry. I say "mood" purposely, because the actual end of the story may be used as an argument against me. But the mood is distinctly that of making light of a matter which, in real life, seldom escapes tragedy, certainly for the child if not for three or four other lives. It is an amazing comment on the day that so many serious dramas are written about trivial themes, which could be brilliantly thrown about with a little saving humor, and that so many farces and comedies are written about serious realities which dig down to primal instincts.

In other words, we are asked to take the possessiveness of Craig's Wife seriously, although we know her husband was a dumb fellow without the one dart of humor that could have pricked her balloon forever; we are asked to wallow in the erotic disturbances of some artist or courtesan, as if they were of tragic import; but along comes the one most essential fact in life, the responsibility of two human creatures toward the new life they have brought into being, and the subject is promptly treated as farce. It is simply standing the facts of existence on their heads. It is a long cry from The Tyranny of Tears to Craig's Wife—but something real has gone out of our lives when we take small things tragically, and, for want of robust humor, take tragic things "in the little." It is rather startling cowardice when we fight off reality with farce, and are willing to embrace gloom only when we know that it is not real—or, if it is real, that it is vastly unimportant. (At the Ambassador Theatre.)

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COMMUNICATIONS

ELINOR WYLIE

New York, N. Y.

TO the Editor:—I have just read the editorial comment in The Commonweal upon my late wife, Elinor Wylie. It is beautifully written. It conveys, certainly, something of her character and temper to the casual reader. But I know you will not misinterpret me when I say that I think the depth of her nature is hardly indicated. In this I am sure that one of your contributors, at least—Padraic Colum, the distinguished Irish poet—would agree with me. For both he and his wife, Mary M. Colum, knew her well, and had cognizance of her love of things of the spirit as did few other friends.

The fastidiousness that Elinor Wylie brought to her art was reflected in her every worldly possession and in every gesture of her life. She was a bright rebel, but she abhorred the vandal. She allied herself to no form of religion but she possessed a deep faith. She was, as she has described beauty in an early poem, "innocent and wild." In one mood she would conceive herself to be her own Peregrine who would "cross a monsoon to chase vagaries," and yet in another—well, there is an unpublished recent poem of hers that closes with a verse I shall quote here. In the previous verse she strangely speaks of laying herself down in death "in silver coverlid and clothing beside my brother, Thomas Browne," and then says:

> "And while I live I'll call Him Mighty,
> Yea, and Eloquent and Just,
> And scratch in earth 'Integer Vitae'
> And 'Dolce Mors' upon the dust."

Elinor Wylie was not of the Catholic faith, she was reared an Episcopalian. She contended to the end that the language of the Book of Common Prayer of the English Church was a service unsurpassed. Shelley she utterly adored and reverenced, but her defense of him in phases of his life that had been subject to criticism was a highly intelligent one. She was a profound scholar of the poet's work; she admitted mistakes upon his part but would point out the extreme youth of the man at the time of his earlier sufferings and the remarkable and rapid growth of his mind in the years that followed. She worshiped courage. She herself had suffered deeply, and still suffered proudly from early recklessness. How great her own courage was, how strong her intellectual integrity, it is my privilege to have known. She could be generous to a fault. She was always on the side of the "under-dogs" of the world. She possessed, in fine, traits that I personally regard as among the most heroic legacies left us by a great Exemplar. Many and many a friend has testified to me concerning her unspoiled innocence of mind and her impulsive warmth of heart. Though I need no other testimony than my own experience.

The poet she carried with her everywhere in England this last summer and read constantly not only in his poems but in his sermons was the great metaphysical poet, John Donne. She was his true intellectual daughter. The world will come to find in her poetry not merely beautiful decoration and exquisite art, but a spiritual stay; for beside this excellent spirit as I have known her and deeply loved her, my own aspirations seem terribly clogged and earthbound.

Genius is many-faceted. If I am capable of recognizing genius when I see it, I saw it in her. Its ways are not of this world, but the intensity of its concern with matters not of this world may remain our touchstone for it. The lamp may be of agate, fitted with silver of intricate and elegant design, but it is a dedicated vessel and a consecrated flame burns within.

Yes, Elinor Wylie could "arrange the bibelots," she could "make scintillant conversation," but, in regard to the latter, it was indeed "about a little more than nothing," if that "little more" be *little,* or, as it seems to me, of utmost import. As to "moral and philosophic security," she possessed spiritual standards that she defended with her life and with her death, and a philosophy that enabled her to bear much spiritual and physical suffering with a high head and a straight gaze. And to me still that flying face is like a banner, her delight and her compassion such delight and such compassion as I hope to find beyond this temporary scene.

WILLIAM ROSE BENÉT.

THE CHURCH AND THE NEGRO

Tacoma, Wash.

TO the Editor—I have read with interest the articles published in The Commonweal since November 27 relative to the above subject. This has aroused a desire to express my sentiments regarding the article by Mr. Edward Campbell Aswell, who appears to be a southern gentleman of the "old school." Being a gentleman, he will not take offense at my disagreement with his proposition.

In the first place, he appears to assume in common with many others, both of his type and otherwise, that control of the Negro by some means or other foreign to the Negro himself is an ideal to be aimed at. Secondly, he seems to have a very peculiar idea of the Catholic Church to be able to visualize this particular institution in the rôle of controller or rather of important assistant to the South in controlling the Negro.

In each case the gentleman is in obvious error. We have arrived at that stage of enlightenment now that we know that the true control of individuals as well as of masses comes from within. And if the Negro has not self-control and is never taught it, the so-called problem cannot be solved, unless the Negro is regarded as absolutely without the pale of human society. If his humanity is admitted at all, all questions of inferiority, racial or cultural, vanish before the necessity of treating him as a man.

Apparently this last is just what some people refuse to do. They persist, in spite of all the evidence to the contrary, in thinking of and treating Negroes as though they were not human. This attitude is expressed in that paragraph of the gentleman's article in which he asserts that the North said that the Negro was *not a Negro.* The North said nothing of the kind, but the trouble in the South arises almost wholly from the fact that the southern people as a class consider the Negro, and treat him, as somewhat less than a man. Whatever their reasons are, this fact cannot be disputed nor reasonably ignored.

As to the Catholic missionary work among Negroes of the South, I would say that the open threat voiced by the gentleman, that the South will make short shrift of said missionary work if they happen to believe that the Church intends to use the Negro for purposes not approved of by the southern

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Protestant whites, will not cause the missionaries of the Church the slightest hesitation. Were he well acquainted with the history of Catholic missionaries in dealing with unchristianized peoples from the beginning until now, he would know that such a threat is not only wholly in vain but that it will stimulate heroic souls to do, dare or die.

The southern Catholics, no doubt, are a trifle timid on this question. I was born of and reared by one of those "shouting Methodist" Negro women he makes so light of, and sired by a black preacher, and my being a Catholic now is due to Catholic missionary work in the South under great difficulties. When I was confirmed in Saint Paul's Catholic Church in a certain city along with several white children, the daily newspaper of the town howled like a demon from Hades for over a week that the Catholic bishop was introducing social equality. But the Catholic bishop went on the even tenor of his holy way and confirmed some more the same way. Some of the white Catholics were almost scared to death and remonstrated with His grace, believing that peace was the great desideratum, and asked him to administer the sacrament privately to the black converts. But he would not listen.

Fighting with the white people about seats on the main floor of the church was also one of the troubles, mostly brought about by jibes and jeers from non-Catholic whites, who charged the Catholics with being a "nigger heaven." The troubles got so hot at one time that the bishop had to come down and lecture both the white and black members of his congregation separately, but after that it all calmed down and everything went on fine. Today there is a fine Catholic church there for the colored people built among their own residences, with a school, and it is getting along fine. Opposition among the non-Catholic neighbors has died, and when a Negro says, "I am a Catholic," he is asked if he goes to Mass, or confession, and if so he is more often employed than not. The effect of Catholic teaching and contact with Catholic people does not tend to make the Negro offensive to white persons, but on the other hand neither does it tend to cause him to bow his head unduly to the oppressor. The gentleman should read history and find that Catholic Negroes were the only American slaves who fought their way to freedom and independence in the new world. Physical fighting is out of the question, but mental development among the Negroes will make it much harder to "control" them unless they are first taught to control themselves. Along this line, it may also be said that self-control does not seem to be held in such high esteem among the southern whites at times, to judge by the number of lynchings.

One of the respondents, a colored non-Catholic, states that it seems ridiculous to think that the Catholic Church can convert the Negroes of the South into Roman Catholics. Let this one laugh. He, too, needs to read some more history. From my own personal experience as a teacher in the South, and from travel and my knowledge of my own people, I believe that today there is no better and more promising field anywhere in the wide, wide world for Catholic missionary effort than among the Negroes of the South. They are losing confidence in their present spiritual rulers, and are all dressed up with nowhere to go. Negro Protestantism is in no better condition than white Protestantism; indeed it is much worse, for the reason that the white Protestants inherit the grievances which they allege against the Catholic Church, but the forefathers of the Negroes were never Catholics, and such prejudices as some Negroes may have are only borrowed from the whites with whom they have been associating.

What is really needed is an intensive campaign among the whole southern people, white and black alike, as to the merits of the Catholic system of religion. Many who will not accept it will be disabused of many erroneous ideas. Self-control needs to be taught to whites as well as blacks in this region, and there can be no better teacher than the same Catholic Church. The South, white and Protestant, has had full control of the Negro for two hundred and fifty years, and has made a complete failure; if they have not failed why are they always crying about controlling the Negro?

I do not believe that any Catholic teaching will make Negroes more offensive to the whites, or more difficult to get along with. I do believe that if the Catholic Church were as strong down there proportionately and as influential as in other parts, the friction between the races would be lessened. Southern Catholics, being few, are intimidated by the great Protestant majority. The only trouble which could arise from Catholic missionary work among the southern Negroes would have its foundation in the imaginary fears and mental astigmatism prevalent in regard to Negroes in that section. The southern Negro is the very best friend the white man has anywhere in the whole world. Everywhere he (the American white) is hated, and tolerated only for his money. The Negroes have been faithful, loyal and true, as a rule; but some of the very white men whose mothers refused to suckle them, and turned them over to Negro mammies during infancy, are the ones who shout the loudest about keeping the Negro in his place, wherever or whatever that is. The fact is, the South has failed completely in its dealing with the Negro question. The whole world knows this. Something new should be tried.

If some Negroes act like beasts, it is to be remembered that they have been considered as beasts and treated as such. Negroes are imitative, and it is not a very good recommendation for the policies of those who should exhibit an example of self-control, that the question of controlling the Negro through the Catholic Church should ever be considered for a moment.

Let the Negro alone. Stop making all kinds of laws to curtail his liberty. Treat him as other men are treated, and it will be found that he will respond like other men—no better and no worse.

Brother Edward C. Aswell should read more and consider that times are changing and that, like other men, the Negroes are changing with the times. The old relation of master and slave is gone forever—and the customs of the people in the South who desire to live upon the sweat of the Negro brow by the aid of both church and state must also change, and give way to a more modern and Christian method.

GUSTAV B. ALDRICH.

FOR MATERIAL ON MARK TWAIN

Mayfield, Calif.

TO the Editor:—I am writing a life of my kinsman, Samuel L. Clemens. If any readers of The Commonweal have letters or information pertaining to the humorist, will they please communicate with me?

CYRIL CLEMENS,
Mark Twain Society.

(The Commonweal invites its readers to send in communications expressing individual views on all topics that are of public interest, regardless of whether or not such topics have been previously discussed in its columns.—The Editors.)

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BOOKS

Miss Repplier Triumphs

Père Marquette: Priest, Pioneer and Adventurer, by Agnes Repplier. New York: Doubleday, Doran and Company. $3.00.

THE Catholic book-shelf, which holds Dryden's Saint Francis Xavier, Francis Thompson's Saint Ignatius of Loyola, and Chesterton's little study of Saint Francis of Assisi, can now receive Agnes Repplier's Père Marquette. There is plenty of room on the shelf. For saintliness does not afford the best material for literature. It is too realistic for the arts called human. The so-called realism of contemporary letters carefully conceals, when it does not deny bravely, the sternest realities of existence—sin, for instance, and moral responsibility and hell—which the saints never allowed themselves to forget. The beauty and romantic adventure of saintly lives require this stern soil, this solid ground, as a point of departure. Any creative writer can see the beauty and romance, but only as detached and somewhat fantastic phenomena unless he can see them necessarily related to the realism of brave and true spirits that scorn illusion.

Here the Catholic writer has an opportunity which ought to be inviting. It is an opportunity which Miss Repplier has improved with obvious enjoyment. She has made the Père Marquette of Parkman's pages more intelligible and human, and at the same time more attractive and heroic, by painting him, as it were, in situ, by making the adventurer in him, gloriously intrepid, only the casual gesture of the priest. In searching for M. André Maurois's "hidden rhythm," the clue that explains the mystery of every life, Miss Repplier discovers it to be, in Marquette's life, a great docility to God's will. Docility seems to be a strange control in the career of a man who scorned the securities of civilized life to challenge, single-handed if need be, the known and unknown terrors of savage and unexplored spaces. But it is my belief that Miss Repplier has put her finger on the secret of Marquette's mystery.

It is unnecessary to say that Père Marquette is not done after the manner of a thesis for a doctorate. Miss Repplier has mastered the extensive erudition of her subject and employs it gracefully. She has extracted the essence from her documents and tells her story in a cursive style which makes it a pleasure to follow her. Her pages are filled with interesting information about pioneer life in Canada and with evidences of care in tracing the footsteps of her hero; but they can flutter with little airs of adventure which only the artist can evoke. And into the main current of the narrative the author can feed tributaries from wide realms of literature where her excursions have given her distinction.

Miss Repplier stops for a moment to note the futile disputes about the respective claims of Père Marquette and Joliet as leaders of their expedition, and their claims as discoverers of the Mississippi. The more serious contention, that Marquette never wrote the narrative published under his name—the novel theory of the Reverend Francis Borgia Steck—gets greater attention. I have not read Father Steck's book and can do no more than venture the opinion that, in her little controversial tilt, Miss Repplier is neatly conclusive and faultlessly urbane.

Miss Repplier may not know that there is a Jesuit school which looks across the fields toward the confluence of the Wisconsin and the Mississippi. The view is a daily reminder of a heroic brother to the Jesuits there; and if Marquette regarded himself as a weakling in comparison with Xavier, they probably entertain similar reflections when they think of Marquette passing by 250 years ago. The exposed target of vaguely known perils, with the art of living reduced to its most primitive elements, competing with savages and hardy woodsmen in bearing hardships for which his gentle nurture and unrobust habit of body placed him at a disadvantage, he maintained the decencies and customs of civilization, and the fidelities of the priesthood and the religious life. In reflections like these, Miss Repplier's gallant story will be a potent and pleasant aid.

JAMES J. DALY.

Israel in the Bronx

Lamentations, by Alter Brody. New York: Coward-McCann. $2.50.

A PROBLEM quite apart from literary merits intervenes in the consideration of this book. It is the old problem of how great a degree of frankness and literal reporting is permissible in the transcription of life into art. Since every review is sure to be read by some who hold that the artist should observe the same restraints of modesty that prevail in conventional social conversation, it is only proper to warn that there are a few passages here which overstep those bounds. But if it be conceded that realism, even to a degree that would be shocking in social intercourse, is justified by earnest and honest intent and by mature and able art, these four tense and profoundly searching dramatic prose-poems may be recommended as rare treasure amid the appalling flood of contemporary printed trash. Alter Brody has added to the small body of authentic literature in these times; here is the golden quality that is fused from understanding and compassion, and transmuted by the touch of a poet.

The subtitle of Lamentations is Folk-Plays of the American Jew. Folk-plays!—how can they be written of people who live in Harlem flats and in new law tenements in the Bronx and Brownsville? Folk-plays about people who live in the lonely stretches of Connemara, in the dark fjords of Norway, in quaint villages on the vasty plains of Russia—folk-plays about people who are remote from great cities, people who dress in amusing and colorful native costumes and speak a quaint speech—these are within the conventions. But how can folk-plays be written about people who keep the little candy and stationery store across the street from the school, and look like anyone else when they travel in the subway; or about those bowed old women in black shawls and meek, watery-eyed, long-bearded little men in shabby suits and greasy skull-caps who amble along the swarming East Side streets?

The answer is that Alter Brody has done it. In his achievement there is a lesson for all artists who are baffled by the problem of where to find their material. It is all about us, the stuff of life, as dramatic, as shot through with tragedy and heroism and fantasy, only a little way under the prosaic surface of the daily round, in the streets of New York or Chicago, in the clapboard bungalows of a shabby suburb, as in the most remote corners of the world. For first of all, these plays of Alter Brody ring true. Here and there the dramatist concentrates his events, shortens his perspective, to avail himself of the "unities"; but the sense of truth to life is absolute. It is as if the roof of the tenement and the synagogue were suddenly lifted, and we saw the people who, when we passed them on the street, seemed the dullest embodiments of the commonplace, caught in the grip of the same emotions as move the kings and nobles in Aeschylus and Sophocles, in Racine and

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Shakespeare. Odd, alien, perhaps repulsive they may seem superficially, but there is about them, in these crises of their lives which Alter Brody has caught, the dignity of human sorrow and human souls in struggle, in defeat, in faith. The wife lamenting that crowning disgrace of Jewish womanhood, sterility; the two old women, humble before their God in the synagogue, curiously suggestive of the old Irishwomen one may see hurrying to six o'clock Mass every morning; the work-worn, worried mother and the feeble mooning father who cannot understand their daughter who prefers poetry to food and blindness to the sight of the sordid world; and the tragic woman who, with the last of her children killed by the sadistic savagery of their father, turns finally to heap his sins upon his head—these are figures so achingly real, and yet without violation of realism, so touched with high poetry, that for the present reviewer at least they instantly take their places among the memorable figures in literature. This is indeed one of those rare books which, once read, call for immediate and repeated rereading, and reveal richer depths each time.

SHAEMAS O'SHEEL.

America, Go East

Japan and the United States, by Payson J. Treat. The Stanford University Press.

DR. TREAT was invited to give a series of lectures at certain Japanese universities, and to the printed record of these he has added an opening chapter upon the heritage of Japan and a closing one in which he sums up the situation, since the Washington conference. The lectures deal with American-Japanese affairs from 1853 to 1921, a period of nearly seventy years, which covers Japanese political and economic history and international affairs since the reopening of the country to world communication and trade.

This volume is the work of a calm mind which sees plainly and sympathetically American policies and activities during the seventy years, as well as the effect of these upon the Japanese people, and the other races whose life and trade find expression and export upon the Pacific rim of the Asiatic continent.

The causes for this calmness of vision are not difficult to discover. Dr. Treat is first of all a student, and secondly, he has made visits to Asia and Australia on three separate occasions—the first in 1906. Thus he is writing of countries and peoples which he has not only studied about and lectured upon in America, but his ideas and theories of which he also has been led to test by actual contact during several successive visits. Hence it is pleasing to read this volume, which is as free from the partizanship of shallowness as it is from the lame impotence of propaganda.

The first chapter deals with the heritage of New Japan, which is conceived and presented in an attractive form and in charming diction, dealing with, among other aspects of Japanese life and history, the art of printing in Japan and China. Seeing that, since the publication of Sir E. Satow's article on the early history of printing in Japan, much research has been done by the late Dr. Carter of Columbia and the learned M. Courant, it seems that Dr. Treat might have given more space to this question, on account of the early use of printing and its invention in Asia.

Upon the purely political aspect of the international relations of Japan, ready acquiescence can be given to the confidence which Dr. Treat displays in the fair dealing of the Japanese government, in connection with the Siberian and the Shantung questions. In both of these cases the Japanese

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fulfilled their promises—Siberia has been evacuated and restored to the Soviet government, Shantung has been handed back to the Chinese; yet it is still curious to note that that section of the world's press which has found it so easy to discover sinister motives and grasping behavior in Japanese diplomacy, remains still silent and unperturbed when France and Britain fail to complete the promises they gave in 1921 to restore Wei-hai-Wei and Kwang-chou-au to China. Apparently some still believe that it is possible for western powers to have a standard in diplomatic affairs differing from that demanded from Asiatic powers.

This volume contains three maps and a good index, but unfortunately Dr. Treat too often quotes from documents and authors without giving any references; nor does he supply a bibliography. None the less the book should be in the hands of the serious student and teacher who can realize that fair views are likely to be lasting views, because from the expression and understanding of fair and sympathetic views of a nation's troubles and problems there will the more readily grow the mental attitude under which peace can be maintained.

However much we Americans may dislike it, the fact remains that in Asia and the vast hinterland behind the Pacific coast, the destiny of America lies. In drawing attention to the past policies and activities of previous Presidents and their Cabinets in this area, Dr. Treat has done a good piece of constructive work.

BOYD-CARPENTER.

Galena's Great Man

Meet General Grant, by W. E. Woodward. New York: Horace Liveright. $5.00.

WHEN W. E. Woodward chose Meet General Grant as the title of his latest biography, he did his book a distinct disservice. For none of the flippancy of the title is to be found in the text by which he seeks to define the character of "a great general and an incredibly poor business man," who became President of the United States. There is, however, abundant evidence of that iconoclasm for which he has gained a certain repute, and those who wish to preserve intact the galaxy of Civil War heroes they have revered since the days of high school history had best avoid Meet General Grant. Despite the characterization of "great," Ulysses S. Grant himself emerges as a general of streaky ability, whose greatest battles were frequently won through an extraordinary combination of good fortune and events over which he had no control. Nor does the hero-smashing stop at Grant. Most of the generals, both Union and Confederate, are represented as incapable of transferring the theories of West Point education into actual practice on the battlefield. The Civil War, seen through Woodward's eyes, was blundered throughout its entire course.

His thesis is that the Civil War was Grant and Grant was the Civil War. Without the war Grant would never have been more than the St. Louis ne'er-do-well, prostrate in contemplation of his own failures and dependent on his wife's people for shelter and food. Without Grant the Civil War would have been a chaotic struggle, indeterminate and protracted to a point where it must have ended because of sheer exhaustion. This postulate justifies Woodward's sublimation of Grant to the Civil War, and it is in tracing the causes of the war and in the description of its waging and its aftermath that the author achieves keen analysis and historical balance. The reader is given a well-defined picture of the

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genesis of the political times which seized on slavery as the bone of contention over which the North fought the South for supremacy in the national legislature. It must be startling to most to read that when Eli Whitney invented the cotton gin he started the Civil War. But Woodward's premises and conclusion are undoubtedly logical. The cotton gin made the production of cotton a bonanza, cotton production augmented the ranks of slaves and involved the agricultural wealth of the South in a death struggle with the manufacturing wealth of the North, and this struggle in turn produced the Mexican and Civil Wars.

But Mr. Woodward set out to write a biography of General Grant. The result is not satisfactory. The very nature of Grant made the undertaking foredoomed to a partial failure. We see the toiling youth, the misfit West Pointer, the plodding quartermaster, the drinking captain, the major, the brigadier-general, the general, the President, the retired idol, but we do not see the man. Grant moves in mystery. The impelling forces that formed his character and molded his life are hidden from the world, probably were hidden from himself. Every schoolboy knows that Grant won the siege of Vicksburg and the battle of Chickamagua and accepted Lee's surrender at Appamatox; few seasoned readers know anything about the history of Grant apart from his campaigns. So in Meet General Grant we find no veils lifted to show an inner perception of a personality which had little color or glamour. The author is probably not entirely to blame—save, perhaps, in his deliberate selection of an enigmatic subject.

JOHN GILLAND BRUNINI.

Il Duce Himself

My Autobiography, by Benito Mussolini; with a foreword by Richard Washburn Child. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. $3.50.

THAT this autobiography is a sustained affirmation of personal supremacy is evident. But it is also clear that Mussolini's triumphant proclamation arouses not merely admiration for past exploits, but expectation of future achievements. That overpowering self-confidence that in the hours of need rallied the youth of Italy, makes itself felt throughout this book as an assurance that the toils of a victorious revolution have given the duce power and determination to lead his country in the work of a magnificent reconstruction.

Mussolini gives little attention in this book to the growth of his private personality. He is interested not in the life that nature gave him, more or less similar to that of his fellowmen, but in that unique one which his mind created. He therefore recasts all his biographical material in the mold of national service, and gives the authentic account of how a man remakes himself to meet the demands of history. We see the various stages of the process; the unconscious preparation, the revelation, the progressive adaptation. As we read on we have the growing sensation of being guided through the intricacies of history by the very hand that unraveled them. Our confused and often clashing memories of recent Italian events emerge from the pages of this book, definitely reshaped into abiding historical actualities that are also the elements of a biography. Even the most superficial reader cannot help feeling the passionate sincerity of this self-interpretation and recognize its significance as a predominant factor in the present history of Italy. What gives both a political and human interest to the book is the description of his constant, heroic effort to strip life of every trait that does not imply duty, of every

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act that is not service to the country, of every thought that cannot be made instrumental to the attainment of national ends, magnificently projected. Mussolini makes himself the embodiment of superhuman capacity for political action; nothing in his life belongs to his pleasures, or to his private relationships. It is all "for the state, within the state," a stupendous isolation and consecration.

The biography of the duce is the living demonstration of the vitality of the Italian nation which, at the moment of need, produces in its people the necessary forces, and out of them the political exponent that will perpetuate such forces in the lasting substance of a reconstituted state.

The assertiveness, therefore, of the author is national rather than personal, and voices the present mood of the country in its revolt against subserviency. "Conciliation without humiliation" is the golden rule which Italy has successfully applied in the last five years of its history, and it is also the fundamental trait of Mussolini's character. We can see this, not to mention other examples, in the revealing and highly significant pages he devotes to the Matteotti case.

Nothing, therefore, could be less accurate than the attempt to see in his biography the sketch of a Nietzschean character after the manner of D'Annunzio. The aesthetic egoism of a Corrado Brando, or of a Claudio Cantelmo is the very antithesis of Mussolini's character. He never presents himself as the sole possessor of a nation's racial genius. His whole conduct contrasts with the immoral individualism of D'Annunzio's heroes. He shows at every step how strong is his faith in those historically human ties which hold together the life of a nation. His is not the arrogance of a slave-driver but the pride of one who feels he has received from history the investiture of the power to carry on the reconstruction of the Italian nation in a measure commensurate with its inherited and reconquered titles. We have not before us the superman; rather, if it is proper to turn an age-hallowed expression, we must see in Mussolini the "dux servorum patriae."

DINO BIGONGIARI.

A Crowded Decade

Europe: A History of Ten Years, by Raymond Leslie Buell. New York: The Macmillan Company. $2.50.

THE average American is likely to be ignorant of political and social conditions abroad. The question as to whether the average European is any better informed about American affairs is beside the point. Motives of both charity and policy should prompt us to keep in touch with developments beyond the sea. But the task is not easy. Especially of late the economic and social upheavals have been so complicated and the political changes so kaleidoscopic, that all but special students may be pardoned a confusion of mind and a weariness of spirit when faced with the European scene. This informing and impartial history of the last ten years fills a much-felt need for an inexpensive, non-technical and compact manual.

Mr. Buell, aided by the staff of the Foreign Policy Association, follows a brief description of the old régime with a statement of the most important provisions of the peace treaties. He tells wherein these have been modified, and gives a clear account of recent events in every country affected by the war. The elements of strength and weakness in the League of Nations are delineated, and attention is directed to all projects for the settlement of international disputes by non-military methods. The almost contemporary facts with which the book is fairly teeming are commendably exact. A certain

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excursion into early history is less happy, for one finds an allusion to "the fall of the Western Roman Empire in 476 A. D." Can it be that Dill, Robinson and Belloc have labored in vain?

This work is notably objective. One misses the warmth of style and the intensity of the personal reactions of a Philip Gibbs whose soul was seared by what he saw in war-torn Europe. There is little effort to be philosophical, to deviate from the obvious or to give the reader a glance behind the scenes. To pick at random a simple illustration, the author accepts by implication the view that Count Brockdorf-Rantzau remained seated at the peace table, when he should have risen, in consequence of bad manners and nonchalance. Some years ago Norman Angell, in The Fruits of Victory, revealed that the German representative was too ill and too distraught to assume the rôle expected of him.

But the dispassionate and unimaginative nature of the narrative endows it with rare excellence for anyone more anxious to get at the facts than to be thrilled by the merits of some cause or causes dear to the heart of the author. As a rule, upon opening a book of this type, one expects to encounter propaganda as thick as the cannon which hemmed in the Light Brigade. One of the most useful features of the work is the faithfulness with which the author exposes the still unhealed sore spots of Europe, and indicates the problems which are yet to be solved. He puts suitable emphasis on such major obstacles to peace as economic barriers and the persecution of minorities. With regard to the latter, people of tolerance and vision can only hope that the governments of the world will come to recognize the truth of Lord Acton's dictum that the amount of freedom of which a nation may legitimately boast can be measured by the security enjoyed by its minorities.

GEORGIANA PUTNAM MCENTEE.

Moralistic Anemia

The New Morality, by Durant Drake. New York: The Macmillan Company.

TO REVIEW this book adequately would require another book, perhaps larger than that reviewed; it is doubtful whether The New Morality is worth it. There is a certain kind of professorial philosopher whose work it is almost impossible to discuss rationally. It smells of the academy. One is forced to agree with much of it, yet its essence is removed from anything resembling life. Mr. Drake is an ornament to this school of philosophers. One dislikes to say anything unkind about his work, yet one cannot review it without being unkind.

Mr. Drake's thesis is that good action is rational action and that to be good one need only be rational. Passages might be quoted from his new book to show that there is more to his thesis than this; basically there is not. Yet it is one of the commonest data of experience that "the good which I will I do not; but the evil which I will not, that I do." Indeed Mr. Drake's own pages prove that to act rationally is beyond unaided human nature, not only because of the natural irrational desire to do evil, but also because perfect knowledge, a prerequisite of rational action, is always impossible. Mr. Drake, for instance, draws that sad picture of the contemporary press so commonly found in professorial writing, and so sadly true. He lays the lack of honesty and conviction shown by the press to competitive advertising, yet he fails to realize that it is this very advertising which makes the press available to the public. He seriously suggests as a solution

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the government's owning and operating the newspapers. One wonders whether Mr. Drake ever makes use of the post-office; if he does, it would surely be clear to him that a government may be efficient, but cannot be enterprising.

Although Mr. Drake sees the evils in the modern world, his suggested cures for them lead one to suspect that professors lead very sheltered lives.

For anyone interested in the serious discussion of ethics, this book cannot be recommended. It contains no ethics worthy of the name. For a rather naive person who wishes to know what is wrong with the modern world, the book may be useful, if the person is intelligent enough to realize how silly are the remedies proposed for the evils.

HARRY LORIN BINSSE.

The Worst Side of Mexico

Red Mexico: A Reign of Terror in America, by Francis McCullagh. New York: Louis Carrier and Company. $3.50.

IN THESE days of many books on Mexico, large and small, that are full of history, half-facts, formal and unsatisfactory official statements, vague and inconclusive opinion—books that bewilder the readers and leave them in doubt as to what is the real situation down in that country—this lurid description of Mexican conditions, couched in strong language, written seemingly with a flowing pen, without restraint or repression, was needed and is worth examination.

Captain McCullagh attempts no thorough study of Mexican politics nor of the people of the country. He is trying to present a photograph in words of the situation, as if he were saying, "This is what I saw in Mexico and heard and felt and think. Take it for what it is worth."

The author believes that Mexico is governed now by men who kill their personal and political enemies, persecute the Catholic Church and steal money and property; that banditry and rebellion are rife all through the country; and that this state of things will continue until the United States, which he holds responsible for the present government, assumes control of matters down there in one way or another.

The book is a serious one. It will shock the reader by its narration of horrors and its awful pictures. It has many facts and many errors, as well.

WILLIAM FLEWELLYN SAUNDERS.

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